



SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.

From the painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds in the 'Tate Gallery'

SIX CENTURIES OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

Passages Selected from the Chief Writers
and Short Biographies

BY

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VOLUME IV
PRIOR TO ROGERS

With Introductory Essay by

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INTRODUCTION

By STEPHEN GWYNN

We delude ourselves by generalizing about centuries as if these arbitrary divisions of time had each a personality; and the eighteenth century is the worst case because it is the best. At no other time was English literature so much shaped into conformity with a commonly accepted standard. Yet the period of which this is true really runs from 1660 to 1790 or thereabouts, and is that in which French influence became dominant as never before in European culture, yet was, as never before, itself inspired and penetrated by the English genius. Still, in a sense it may be said that in the latter part of the seventeenth century England was mainly receptive, learning a new lesson; adapting itself to a new rigour of form in verse, and, on the other hand, bringing English prose into a much closer relation with the rhythms of cultivated speech; whereas at the very opening of the eighteenth century Pope established, completed and refined Dryden's achievement in verse. His technical ascendancy was extraordinary and for at least two generations fixed not only the rhythms but the dialect of poetry. The only thing comparable is Tennyson's position during the latter half of Queen Victoria's reign; but Tennyson taught the use of most varied metres, whereas the effect of Pope's example was practically to banish all these irregular movements in verse, which from the first had come so natural to English singers. Nobody who was anybody sang in the eighteenth century, with the exception of Gay—one of those easy-going men who can refuse to conform without calling attention to their singularity. Otherwise the poet in those days was content to declaim, and occasionally the note of passion lifted his voice to a chant that might be noble or moving; but on the whole, this period disavowed passion. Reason was regarded as the master faculty, the

only one worth cultivating. Swift, the greatest figure of them all, set as much value as any man that ever lived on what he called "genius"; yet I question if he ever attached importance to those things in poetry which are no more translatable than music or a dance. Pope in the preface to his collected works tells us that he wrote in verse because he could express himself more shortly that way; and Swift in one of his epistles says that he ought by rights to envy Pope his verses since he can "fix More sense in one than I in six". Essentially, verse was to these men a medium for the expression of thought; an adorned expression, but still the expression of thought not distinct in quality from what might be uttered in prose. Neither Swift nor Pope would have admitted that natural man must dance, and that poetry is one of the ways in which he dances; or that certain things can be expressed by dancing which simple locomotion, however graceful, cannot convey. In other words, the sphere of poetry lay closer at this period to the sphere of prose than at any other in our literary history. Poetry was more severely rationalized and therefore limited itself practically to satire and eulogy, or moralizing discourse. Passion was kept in leading-strings. Yet, even when reason dominates, anger, convinced of its own righteousness, always takes licence to inflame the spirit, and almost the supreme example of eighteenth century verse is to be found in Pope's attack on Addison. This is the kind of poetry which can be made in perfection with the colours of prose: indeed it varies from prose by almost imperceptible gradations; the final difference is that passion is there. Yet the rhyme, the close-knit supple rhythm, have less the beauty of a dancer's motion than of a fencer's tense, controlled, preparatory movements and then, lightning swift, the lunge.

Everywhere else the convention cramps emotion; yet in Goldsmith, who never departs from the strict canon either of language or of metre, a wave of feeling floods through, and the passage about the hare whom horn and hounds pursue is fixed on the memory of thousands to whom Pope is only a name. Nothing could limit Goldsmith to ratiocination, though few men could reason more dexterously or with so light a touch; but what breaks through the formality of his verse is the heart's unreasoning cry, the longing of this homeless, shiftless child of genius for the home to which, if the truth must be spoken, he never seriously attempted to return.

There were of course attempts to break away. Blake is hardly to be quoted as showing a reaction, though he anticipated in his *Songs of Innocence* much that is most characteristic in Wordsworth's deliberate revolt. But Blake in a way existed in a world of his own; he is of no century, almost outside space and time. Cowper, much more normal, found ways of his own to walk in; yet one of the two poems by which alone he attains to the first rank is definitely in Pope's metre and manner—the lines to his mother's picture. The other, that awful cry of the *Shipwreck*, has at least some affinity to one form of lyric poetry which persisted through that songless age—hymn writing, in which Cowper took his part. Earlier than these are the happier examples of Gray and of Collins. Yet both of them, though they invented felicities of form and made verse once again the vehicle of delicate emotion, were still hampered by the tradition of their day in the use of language. Neither broke loose from or enlarged the poetic dialect of that time. Set their best beside what Robert Burns was writing a few years later, and the difference is manifest; nor is the reason that Burns chanced to be a peasant. He was writing in a literary tradition as old as that of England, but one which had never lost its own natural characteristics and which, in the mouths of gentle and of simple, retained contact with the soil from which it sprung. Pope and the rest, following the lead of Boileau, had refined the language of poetry to the standard of some imaginary drawing-room; they kept full freedom only in satire, where the coarsest terms were admitted. But the Scots makers went on from generation to generation, singing and making; and though Burns like others was affected by the models of his day in English, he used, even when following them (as in his *Cotter's Saturday Night*), a less hackneyed vocabulary. But for the most of his time he happily forgot that contemporary English verse existed. It is hard to say whether we should put higher such works as *Tam o' Shanter* and the *Holy Fair*, in which Burns makes his own creation from his own fullness of vitality, or those in which he takes floating echoes of old refrains or stanzas that had drifted down from lip to lip, hanging about the heughs and hillsides like thistle down or whin blossom, and fixed them for ever by a few touches into masterpieces of the world's song. Such a man could not die and leave no heirs; and Scott and Hogg were ready to take up the tradition from him

long before old Crabbe and Rogers had exhausted the last echoes of Pope.

But Scotland was not England, and in England the young men who grew up with a desire for imaginative expression all wrote poetry as a matter of course, and wrote in heroic couplets. Horace Walpole is a case in point; while Gray, his companion in their early years, attracted by poetry but repelled by the prevailing models, wrote his early effusions in Latin alcaics. But both of them, as their correspondence shows us, already when they were one-and-twenty possessed a prose style for which no precedent could be found in English before 1700; nimble, easy and carrying with it all the inflections of a speaking voice. The perfecting of this manner may fairly be called the eighteenth century's great achievement, for it was the work of literary society rather than of any one man. Addison traditionally gets the credit of it, thanks to an observation of Johnson's, which will be found quoted in these pages; but it is odd that we should take as an authority on this matter the man who did most to undo what Addison and the rest had accomplished. In point of fact the beginner who wishes to acquire a perfect prose style would do better to pass his days and nights with a volume of Goldsmith, whom Johnson alternately bullied and protected and never, at least till after his death, knew for the master that he was. Yet it was not Goldsmith who created the eighteenth century English prose style; he found it ready; a letter written to his mother when he was three-and-twenty has already all his characteristic charm. The work was done earlier, and beyond doubt Addison had a great hand in it; though any candid man who reads the unsigned sheets of the *Tatler* or *Spectator* will probably admit to a great difficulty in deciding which are the work of Addison and which of Steele. In popularizing this form of literature Steele and not Addison was the pioneer. Journalism has got a bad name; but if journalists have done much to corrupt English prose style, they were the folk who formed it. Before the era of these light fugitive pieces, prose was always written as if for the folio; those who used it could never forget the Ciceronian models; and even Milton's noblest passages, if we consider them as examples, are certainly not good to imitate. But when the broadsheet was made the fashion and addressed to polite society at large, an casier movement was necessary; the

writer was obliged to construct his sentence, not to be pored over like a legal document, but so that it should carry its meaning as swiftly and unlaboriously as good talk. Steele did this well, Addison did it beautifully; but the development of English prose is better studied in their great contemporary Jonathan Swift, who put the instrument to a far greater variety of uses. In his hands it could caress or could sear; could persuade or demolish; it could convey the whole weight of the most dominant personality in the literature of that age; and one can observe how the weapon itself was simplified as its uses became more complex. For in his first work and the *Tale of a Tub* he moves encumbered with many trappings; learning hangs about his pen, not quite digested into the flow of ink; he seeks for recondite words, his sentences have a touch of Marvell's long-drawn out rhythms. One is aware of a man writing to be read in the study, and conversant with books rather than with life. But the tone changes when he has left Temple's household and in the maturity of his powers turns to using his pen as a weapon in current affairs. *The Arguments against the Abolition of Christianity*, published in 1707, shows his powers in perfection: yet the affectation of gravity here constrains him to a certain formalism in the construction of his sentences. But the later tracts, for instance the *Modest Proposal* (for utilizing the Irish population by eating the babies at three months old) has a more savage irony but a far simpler expression. These were things not meant to last, that have lasted only because of the mastery of their execution, and also because the world is not indifferent to anything which came from the sombre genius whose completest expression is to be found by reading *Gulliver's Travels* and the *Journal to Stella*. The *Travels* are written with an affected simplicity, to reproduce the language of an ordinary merchant captain, yet are weighed syllable by syllable so that every word has its exact place and effect. On the other hand, the *Journal* is scribbled, often on a pad in bed, putting down thoughts, stories, messages, tendernesses, sense and nonsense, pell mell as they came; but in these two productions of the same mind one may discern all the excellences of English prose.

Gulliver is of course a supreme work of art; but it stands by itself. Yet it was certain that this new knack of prose would be applied to imaginative uses; and already Swift's contemporaries,

Steele and Addison, had invented characters who held imaginary dialogue together. Sir Roger de Coverley, Will Wimble and the rest were fictitious persons, known to everybody. But it had not yet occurred to anyone to use imagination in furnishing a story of their lives, till after Steele and Addison were both buried. In their works and those of their imitators, contemporary manners were drawn upon to furnish material for delicate prose essays (and also for some indelicate) and for drawing characters, not in the abstract but embodied with their physical expression. In the meantime prose narrative was carried to extraordinary perfection in different manners by Defoe in his *Robinson Crusoe* and by Swift in *Gulliver*. It would be difficult to decide whether Defoe's invention of that which may probably have had some origin in real life, or Swift's of that which was entirely fantastic, arrived at more complete verisimilitude. At all events Swift's satire, by an irony that surpasses all that ever Swift conceived, is very largely read as a tale by children. But neither Defoe nor Swift attempted dramatic narrative, the clash of character against character, brain against brain, will against will. There was a public for plays and there was a public for romances; Horace Walpole and his like read Madame Scudéry with avidity; but years passed on and nobody conceived the idea of blending the developed art of prose narration to the not less developed studies of character, until at last an elderly master-printer who had dabbled a good deal in writing essays, far more with purpose to produce works of edification than works of art, was invited by two booksellers of his acquaintance to furnish a series of letters that should serve as a guide to conduct. To write them effectively, Mr. Samuel Richardson knew that he must work out in imagination the character and situation of the writer and of the person to whom the letter was written. One of these letters was to be from an anxious father to his daughter, then servant in the house of a gentleman who might not improbably have designs on her. Suddenly it occurred to Richardson that the subject lent itself not to one letter but to a series, in which should be disclosed the whole process of attempted seduction and of resistance; and in the end virtue might be rewarded by a most edifying promotion. He was over fifty, had been twice married, and married or single had been (we have his own word for it) an example of continence. But throughout his life he had always been passion-

ately preoccupied with the love affairs of women, and now he plunged ecstatically into a love chase in which he was not the pursuer but the pursued. He entered body and soul into the person and the petticoats of a pretty housemaid and kept an audience of his own domestic ladies quivering in suspense, as Pamela foiled or eluded one after another the attempts made on her virtue by "Mr. B.". No detail of the exciting scenes was spared, and a later age would have counted many of them most improper; but Richardson was strong in his conviction of righteousness, and what mattered more, knew instinctively how a story ought to be told. Two centuries since then have demonstrated that mankind, and more specially womankind, has an unlimited appetite for stories which represent the kind of life with which the readers are familiar and which turn upon a love affair. Richardson flung to a world that had only been able to concern itself with the shadowy affairs of remote princesses this concentration of gossip, dramatized with amazing verve. The public simply gulped it down. *Pamela* became the rage. Sermons were preached about her story, the scenes were exhibited in waxwork with a hundred figures; and the elderly printer, whose anonymity was soon ended, drank incense of adulation from a widening coterie of most respectable females.

But it was not all praise. He could write and he had the luck of beginning when prose was fully supplied to use, and yet not hackneyed. But in spite of his talent for imaginative impersonation, he had little instinct for literature and no humour at all. Parodies were inevitable and they came; one of the worst (and it was very indecent) from Henry Fielding, a barrister, a scholar and a man of abounding humour. The vein amused him, and he followed up his disgraceful *Shamela* with *Joseph Andrews*, which purported to be the story of Pamela's brother, a footman, equally virtuous and equally exposed to temptation from an employer. So turned round, the situation was ridiculous enough; but in the writing of his story, Fielding needed to invent subordinate characters, and one of these, Parson Adams, came to such lusty life that the intention of parody was forgotten and the parodist found himself writing a novel for its own sake. Seven years later he had finished *Tom Jones*, an admitted masterpiece. But in the meantime Richardson, after the mistaken enterprise of providing a second part to *Pamela*, had launched on a

greater venture. It was to be the love chase again; nothing else interested this genuine beginner of the British novel; again it was to be the story of an attempted and long-prepared seduction. But this time the victim was to be no housemaid but a beautiful and rich young woman, whose intelligence almost surpassed her beauty; the seducer was to be no vague "Mr. B." but one in whom all the talents of seduction were blended; and for a supreme stroke, the dark design was to succeed, and Clarissa must die outraged, yet not defeated, triumphant in the unbroken resistance of her will.

It will be seen that this time Richardson, if he should succeed, must impersonate not one character only; he must be Lovelace as completely as he is Clarissa. (Incidentally, he impersonates other characters, some of them most successfully.) In this long-drawn story, all is told by letters, all bearing on precisely the same subject, each one describing a stage in the hunt, and totalling up to nine volumes before the scene closes. If we can read it to-day with admiration and even with excitement, it is by reason of the perfect identification of the writer with the persons he assumes. Lovelace may be impossible, but Richardson can make him credible, because for the moment he becomes, he is, that accomplished breaker of hearts. The virtuous printer has invented a rake with whose personality he can merge his own; a rake without grossness, impelled less by sensuality than by the desired triumph of sex over sex. Again, in drawing his heroine he has the difficult task of making it credible that a refined and highly educated young woman can be first duped and then, against all her restraints and principles, be strongly attracted by the man whose purposes she has so good reason to distrust. It is not surprising that this work extended its reputation in foreign lands far more widely than Fielding's; for the essence of it is in the invention and the psychology; the writing, though often of astonishing vigour, is only secondary; and humour, of all qualities the least transferable in a translation, does not exist. Thanks to Richardson, the English novel was famous throughout Europe within ten years after he began to write.

It is not easy to overestimate the importance of this literary discovery, which was promptly exploited. Smollett followed Fielding without Fielding's grace of style or wit, but with all his taste for knock-about adventure. Yet in the best of his books, *Humphry*

Clinker, he went back to Richardson's device of a series of epistles, which inevitably lengthens the story. This hampered his strong gift for direct narration. But on the whole the creators of the English novel were more concerned with displaying character than with telling a tale. The impulse given by Steele and Addison with Sir Roger de Coverley and his circle was more potent than that which came from Defoe. Goldsmith wrote one novel only and it would not be unjust to describe the plot of the *Vicar* as a tissue of absurdities. Yet if there is consent of opinion about any work, it is concerning this adorable masterpiece which conveys not only character but atmosphere and philosophy; the atmosphere of a country vicarage such as that in which Goldsmith was brought up, the philosophy of a Christian whose chief delight is in happy faces. Goldsmith could make people laughable without making them ridiculous; he could lend dignity to the misfortunes which come from a heart overflowing with kindness and a head that cannot suspect guile.

Sterne in his *Tristram Shandy* took the new form and twisted it back into something even more closely resembling the first detached studies of strongly contrasted persons. He came as near dispensing with a plot altogether as any novelist that has written; he sophisticated narrative no less than he bedevilled the easy simplicity of that prose style which Goldsmith had brought to the highest beauty. After him, the sudden creative impulse appeared to have spent itself. Except for Miss Burney's *Evelina*, the last decades of the eighteenth century offer nothing in this kind that can be read nowadays with a pleasure comparable to that given by the ordinary well-written story of any competent nineteenth century craftsman or craftswoman; and the novel, speaking broadly, lapsed back into such disrepute that Walter Scott, who willingly accepted fame as a narrative poet, was shy of letting it be known that he had turned his hand to prose fiction.

Yet the thing was done. England of the eighteenth century had gone far to perfect a literary form which has increasingly dominated the field of imaginative creation from that day onwards; which has very largely usurped the place occupied by the drama, and has even poached on the manors of poetry. Its original success sprang from its concentration on contemporary and familiar themes; it was the

drama of events and personages amenable to the tests of ordinary experience. Its originator, a very commonplace intelligence, knew better than his more gifted competitors how to appeal to the simplest taste of curiosity to know what happens. While *Clarissa* was appearing by instalments, Richardson's correspondence was crammed with appeals that he should bring his heroine safe out of her dangers: and the proof that he was really an artist is given by his austere resistance to the demand for a happy ending. Yet he had a public in all classes of society hanging on his lips, and from his day onward the great novelists have each in turn enthralled humanity with a spell that no other form of artist commands.

Oddly enough, the makers of the English novel (for Goldsmith really is not to be counted among them) lay outside the central literary grouping of their time; though it was an age when literary activity was unusually social. Two men in succession dominated it—Swift and Johnson—but with a difference. Swift never looked to writing for a means of livelihood, he was from the first concerned with questions of government; but he held that brains should be a title to power, and believed in a close association between the man who held power and the men who had talent. He wanted the wits to work together and he wanted to see those men in power who could appreciate the wits. Steele, Addison, Prior, Gay, Arbuthnot, and of course Swift himself, were either in some sort of office or in close touch with the office holders. Pope, the supreme literary artist, stood aloof from official ties but was closely linked with this society—so closely that he, Swift and Arbuthnot actually to some extent collaborated—as, for that matter, Swift had at times collaborated with Steele on the *Tatler*. Whether in prose or verse, all these men were busy helping to polish and refine each other's art. *Gulliver's Travels* probably owed some suggestions to Arbuthnot; and it was Swift who proposed to Gay the idea of a "Newgate Pastoral".

But the vital centre of this grouping was Swift, and Swift was keenly in politics which estranged him sharply from Steele and made impossible any close continuing intercourse with Addison. Moreover it was only between the years 1708 and 1714 that he spent most of his time in England. After Queen Anne's reign the ties in this group were maintained only by correspondence, though

Pope and Arbuthnot and Bolingbroke, now man of letters rather than politician, and to a less extent Prior and Gay, saw each other often.

They were, however, from first to last all tolerably prosperous persons; gentlemen who could order their bottle of wine in any coffee-house and never ran short of clean linen. The new grouping that grew up as they disappeared from the stage was very different: its members passed into fame under the Caudine Forks of Grub Street. Swift knew Grub Street but knew it as a dispenser of bounty, distributing jobs to his "underspurleathers"; Johnson and Goldsmith were the veriest hacks. The story of how Johnson emerged from this underworld to be the literary dictator of his day and the adored companion not only of the accepted wits but of smart young men about town, is one of the most moving in the world, and certainly the best told. He was never the author of a masterpiece, but he was the hero of one, and he furnished not only the deeds but the words for it. Boswell has preserved the personality, the oddities, and the very conversation of one whose genius showed at its best in talk. Thanks to Boswell, we know immensely more about the Club which Johnson founded than about the earlier one which was originally established by Swift; but the difference is clear. Swift's began with politicians and men high in power who had the taste for literary conviviality; Johnson's was literary in the first instance and it had a strong dash of Bohemia. It brought in Goldsmith, then known as a versatile but impecunious hack, whom his friends, including Johnson, found it hard to take seriously, even when he had published his two idylls and the *Vicar*. Apart from these two, there was no other writer of the first rank till Gibbon joined the Society; but there was Garrick and there was Reynolds. The only politician was Burke, and Goldsmith's sketch in *Retaliation* lets us know how the circle resented that Burke

narrowed his mind,

And to party gave up what was meant for mankind;

Though fraught with all learning, yet straining his throat

To persuade Tommy Townshend to lend him a vote.

In this way, the society was much more varied and inclusive than the earlier grouping, but it was less comprehensive. Richardson,

Fielding and Sterne lay outside it, though Richardson had employed Goldsmith as a printer's reader and was on terms of exchanging literary compliment with Johnson—who also on occasions borrowed money from him. But Richardson was not a clubbable man nor fit for any society but his own female and adoring circle. It is more significant that Gray, certainly the master poet of that century after Pope, held completely aloof from all his congeners, except Horace Walpole and one mediocrity, Mason. Walpole on his part looked down on the professional literary men because they were professionals—though he could see no reason why Gray should refuse to take money from the booksellers.

But the whole thing was getting bigger; more people were writing and in a greater variety of kinds. There were the novelists; there were also the historians, Robertson and Hume, useful in their century, Gibbon making a monument for all time. There was the literature of speculative philosophy, Hume and Adam Smith each in his separate way setting a permanent and British stamp on European thought. One says "British", because these men, and Robertson also, hailed from Scotland, which in the last half of the eighteenth century fully rivalled England in productiveness: indeed if we are to count in the purely Scots literature which culminated in Burns, England can hardly pretend to equality.

There was also æsthetic philosophy, Reynolds's discourses on art, and Burke's essay *On the Sublime and Beautiful*—of which two, Reynolds's is the better reading. Burke's genius only had full play when the government of human society was its theme, and then, even for some temporary occasions, he lifted the language back to splendours which had not been known since Milton's day and which were freed from Milton's clogging touch of Latinism. But Burke's prose style, like Milton's, was of no use to anyone but its creator; and the best of these men in the latter half of the century use an English style that has become stiffened and formalized. The one exception was Goldsmith, who declared himself openly in revolt, and said that men should write naturally. It was his way of putting Swift's definition of style, "proper words in proper places". The tyranny against which he revolted was Johnson's example. Sonorously elaborated periods with ponderous words balanced in anti-thesis had been brought into vogue by this great writer in the days

when poverty kept him out of decent company, and his genius for talk had not the chance to develop. Later in his *Lives of the Poets* we have a prose from him bearing much closer relation to what he spoke. But Johnson's talk was, to speak truth, over emphatic, and lacked the supple ease with which Swift could drive home a bitter stab or Goldsmith irradiate some sentence with the gentle irony of unuttered laughter. Nevertheless, since it is easier to work to the footrule than by the instinctive co-operation of hand and eye, Johnson's method prevailed, and a manner was established suitable to writing for print. Even Horace Walpole conforms to it in what he wrote for publication; though his letters up to the very last decade of the century keep the vivacious changing rhythms of his natural speech. So, with less vivacity, but a more pervasive humour, do Cowper's. First and last this eighteenth century is the age of the great letter writers. But if we are to consider compositions designed for the public eye, it first perfected English prose in the main by journalism, and then, in the main by journalism, spoilt it. The more formal type prevailed, keeping always some echo of Johnson's knock-me-down-with-a-folio manner, till Macaulay took the pattern and cut it into shorter lengths, when it passed for a new thing. But this is overlapping. Yet in order to understand what the eighteenth century accomplished for English literature it is necessary to take a few pages of Thackeray and compare them with a few of Swift and Goldsmith, and then turn back say to Sir Thomas Browne, or even Clarendon. It will be seen that except for a few tricks of punctuation the English eighteenth century writers had nothing to learn from anybody in the matter of prose style, and that the best in this kind since their day have been their scholars.

PRIOR TO ROGERS

c. 1700 — *c.* 1800

which he followed the Hudibrastic tradition. His metre and rhymes, however, are smoother than those of Butler. His satirical perversion of Boileau's pompous *Ode sur la prise de Namur* (Namur was taken by the French in 1692, and retaken by the English in 1695) is a masterpiece of burlesque. His intolerably stiff modernization of the delightful old ballad *The Nut-brown Maid* (rechristened *Henry and Emma* in its new avatar) is a complete failure, as are his imitations of Chaucer. The former is an outstanding example of pouring romantic wine into classical bottles. His paraphrase of *1st Corinthians*, xiii (part of which is given below), is a shining example of how, by a kind of inverted alchemy, a man of no mean

ability could turn gold into dross. Prior's best poems are his short and playful ones, such as *To a Child of Quality*, *A Simile*, *The Female Phaeton*, and numerous others. In these poems he displays a lightness of touch and a finish of style which link him to the neatest of the Roman poets, to Horace and to Martial. His choice of light tripping metres for many of his best poems did something towards lessening the tyranny which the heroic couplet exercised over eighteenth-century poetry.

[A. R. Waller, *The Writings of Matthew Prior*; L. G. W. Legg, *Matthew Prior: a Study of his Public Career and Correspondence*; F. Bickley, *The Life of Matthew Prior*.]

An Ode

The merchant, to secure his treasure,
Conveys it in a borrow'd name:
Euphelia serves to grace my measure;
But Cloe is my real flame.

My softest verse, my darling lyre,
Upon Euphelia's toilet lay;
When Cloe noted her desire,
That I should sing, that I should play.

My lyre I tune, my voice I raise;
But with my numbers mix my sighs:
And whilst I sing Euphelia's praise,
I fix my soul on Cloe's eyes.

Fair Cloe blush'd; Euphelia frown'd:
I sung and gaz'd: I play'd and trembled:
And Venus to the Loves around
Remark'd, how ill we all dissembled.

The Lady who Offers her Looking-Glass to Venus

Venus, take my votive glass;
Since I am not what I was,
What from this day I shall be,
Venus, let me never see.

A Simile

Dear Thomas, didst thou never pop
Thy head into a tin-man's shop?
There, Thomas, didst thou never see
('Tis but by way of simile)
A squirrel spend his little rage,
In jumping round a rolling cage?
The cage, as either side turn'd up,
Striking a ring of bells a-top?—
Mov'd in the orb, pleas'd with the chimes,
The foolish creature thinks he climbs:
But here or there, turn wood or wire,
He never gets two inches higher.
So fares it with those merry blades,
That frisk it under Pindus' shades.
In noble songs, and lofty odes,
They tread on stars, and talk with gods;
Still dancing in an airy round,
Still pleas'd with their own verses' sound;
Brought back, how fast soe'er they go,
Always aspiring, always low.

To a Child of Quality

(five years old, MDCCIV, the Author then forty)

Lords, knights, and squires, the numerous band,
That wear the fair Miss Mary's fetters,
Were summon'd by her high command,
To show their passions by their letters.

MATTHEW PRIOR

My pen among the rest I took,
 Lest those bright eyes that cannot read
 Should dart their kindling fires, and look
 The power they have to be obey'd.

Nor quality, nor reputation,
 Forbid me yet my flame to tell,
 Dear five years old befriends my passion,
 And I may write till she can spell.

For, while she makes her silkworms beds
 With all the tender things I swear;
 Whilst all the house my passion reads,
 In papers round her baby's hair;

She may receive and own my flame,
 For, though the strictest prudes should know it,
 She'll pass for a most virtuous dame,
 And I for an unhappy poet.

Then too, alas! when she shall tear
 The lines some younger rival sends;
 She'll give me leave to write, I fear,
 And we shall still continue friends.

For, as our different ages move,
 'Tis so ordain'd, (would Fate but mend it!)
 That I shall be past making love,
 When she begins to comprehend it.

Epitaph

Extempore

Nobles and heralds, by your leave,
 Here lies what once was Matthew Prior;
 The son of Adam and of Eve,
 Can Bourbon or Nassau go higher?

A Letter

*To the Honourable Lady Margaret Cavendish Holles-Harley,
 when a child*

My noble, lovely, little Peggy,
 Let this, my first epistle, beg ye,

At dawn of morn and close of even,
To lift your heart and hands to heaven.
In double beauty say your prayer:
Our Father first,—then Notre Père:
And, dearest child, along the day,
In every thing you do and say,
Obey and please my lord and lady,
So God shall love, and angels aid ye.
If to these precepts you attend,
No second letter need I send,
And so I rest your constant friend.

From “Charity”

*A Paraphrase of the Thirteenth Chapter of the
First Epistle to the Corinthians*

Did sweeter sounds adorn my flowing tongue,
Than ever man pronounc'd, or angel sung;
Had I all knowledge, human and divine,
That thought can reach, or science can define;
And had I power to give that knowledge birth,
In all the speeches of the babbling earth;
Did Shadrach's zeal my glowing breast inspire,
To weary tortures, and rejoice in fire;
Or had I faith like that which Israel saw
When Moses gave them miracles and law:
Yet gracious Charity, indulgent guest,
Were not thy power exerted in my breast,
Those speeches would send up unheeded prayer;
That scorn of life would be but wild despair;
A tymbal's sound were better than my voice,
My faith were form, my eloquence were noise.

Charity, decent, modest, easy, kind,
Softens the high, and rears the abject mind;
Knows with just reins, and gentle hand to guide,
Betwixt vile shame and arbitrary pride.
Not soon provok'd, she easily forgives;
And much she suffers, as she much believes,
Soft peace she brings, wherever she arrives:
She builds our quiet, as she forms our lives:
Lays the rough paths of peevish Nature even;
And opens in each heart a little Heaven.

ISAAC WATTS

(1674-1748)

ISAAC WATTS was born on 17th July, 1674, at Southampton, where his father was a clothier and subsequently a schoolmaster. He was educated at Southampton Grammar School and at a dissenting academy at Stoke Newington, where he remained until he was twenty. He spent two and a half years at home, and then became tutor to the son of Sir John Hartopp. In 1699 he was chosen to be assistant pastor in the chapel in Mark Lane; three years later he became pastor. He was not naturally robust, and had injured his health by too close application to study. In 1712 he was so seriously ill that he went to Theobalds, then the house of Sir Thomas Abney, a former Lord Mayor of London, to recuperate; this life suited him so well and he endeared himself so much to the Abney family that he remained an inmate of this household until his death thirty-six years later. His health interfered with but did not end his pastoral activities. Watts wrote or compiled many educational manuals which were of importance in their day—a *Logic* (1725), a *Scripture History* (1732), and *The Improvement of the Mind* (1741). He is now remembered chiefly for his hymns and his poems for the young, though

Lewis Carroll's parodies of the latter are perhaps better known than their originals. *Horae Lyricae* appeared in 1706, his *Hymns* in 1707, and his *Psalms of David* in 1719. He wrote in all some six hundred hymns; some are marred by bad taste and 'poetical diction', but a few are among the best hymns ever written, and are sung all over the world. The most famous of them are perhaps *Our God, our help in ages past; When I survey the wondrous Cross; and Jesus shall reign where'er the sun. The Divine Songs*, the first children's hymn-book, appeared in 1715. Watts was a much broader-minded man than most of his contemporaries; if he was not himself an Arian, he at any rate sympathized with those who held Arian views. He was a pioneer in popularizing education, as well as in hymn-writing, and was a man of the truest piety and religious zeal. In 1728 he was made an honorary D.D. by Edinburgh University. "Academical honours," says Dr. Johnson, "would have more value if they were always bestowed with equal judgement." He died on 25th November, 1748, and was buried at Bunhill Fields.

[T. Wright, *Isaac Watts and Contemporary Hymn-Writers*.]

Hymns

Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Doth his successive journeys run;

His kingdom stretch from shore to shore,
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.

To Him shall endless prayer be made,
And princes throng to crown His head;
His name, like sweet perfume, shall rise
With every morning sacrifice.

People and realms of every tongue
Dwell on His love with sweetest song,
And infant voices shall proclaim
Their early blessings on His name.

Blessings abound where'er He reigns;
The prisoner leaps to lose his chains;
The weary find eternal rest,
And all the sons of want are blest.

Where He displays His healing power,
Death and the curse are known no more;
In Him the tribes of Adam boast
More blessings than their father lost.

Let every creature rise and bring
Peculiar honours to our King;
Angels descend with songs again,
And earth repeat the loud Amen.

* * * * *

Our God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home.

Under the shadow of Thy throne,
Thy saints have dwelt secure,
Sufficient is Thine arm alone,
And our defence is sure.

Before the hills in order stood,
Or earth received her frame,
From everlasting Thou art God,
To endless years the same.

A thousand ages in thy sight
 Are like an evening gone,
 Short as the watch that ends the night,
 Before the rising sun.

Time, like an ever-rolling stream,
 Bears all its sons away,
 They fly forgotten as a dream
 Dies at the opening day.

Our God, our help in ages past,
 Our hope for years to come,
 Be Thou our guard while troubles last,
 And our eternal home.

JOHN PHILIPS

(1676 - 1709)

JOHN PHILIPS was born on 30th December, 1676, at Bampton, in Oxfordshire. His father was Vicar of Bampton and Archdeacon of Salop. He was educated at Winchester, where he received special consideration on account of his delicate health, and at Christ Church, Oxford, then the home of "wit" rather than of deep learning. His natural talents enabled him to shine even in such distinguished company. For a while he intended to study medicine, but abandoned it for literature. He was a scholarly and well-read man, whose bent of mind was fixed by his admiration for Virgil and Milton. His earliest and best-known work, *The Splendid Shilling*, was a parody of *Paradise Lost*. It was published in a pirated edition in 1701, and again in 1705; the appearance of the second pirated

version induced Philips to publish in the same year an authorized version. The humour of the poem consists in treating a ludicrously mean subject in the grand style of the "God-gifted organ-voice of England". Like all good parodists, Philips knew well the author whom he parodied, and, like most good parodists, sincerely loved his victim. *The Splendid Shilling* is an excellent poem, though no longer what Addison said it was, "the finest burlesque in the British language" (whatever that tongue may be). Its success caused Philips to be asked to write a poem on the battle of Blenheim, which was to serve as a Tory counterpart to Addison's *Campaign*. The result, *Blenheim, a Poem* (1705), cannot be called happy. Philips's friend, Edmund Smith, wished it had been written in Latin; certainly its banalities would

have been veiled by the decent obscurity of a learned language. The warfare it depicts is Homeric rather than of the age of Queen Anne; Marlborough's virtues are those of Hector or Achilles rather than those of "Corporal John". Philips's most important poem is his *Cyder* (1708), written in imitation of the *Georgics*. It is admirably conceived and executed; Philip Miller, the great gardener and botanist, said of it that "there were many books written on the same subject in prose, which do not contain so much truth as that

poem". Philips, however, had made his name as a writer of a burlesque, and was not so acceptable to the public when he appeared in another rôle. He died of consumption and asthma on 15th February, 1709, and was buried in Hereford Cathedral. A monument to his memory stands in Poets' Corner, Westminster Abbey. His two poems, burlesque and didactic, are attractive in themselves, and are of importance as having been written in blank verse at a time when that metre was somewhat under a cloud. Philips's poems have been edited by M. G. Lloyd Thomas.

From "The Splendid Shilling"

Happy the man who, void of cares and strife,
 In silken or in leathern purse retains
 A Splendid Shilling: He nor hears with pain
 New oysters cry'd, nor sighs for cheerful ale,
 But with his friends when nightly mists arise,
 To Juniper's Magpye, or Town-Hall repairs,
 Where, mindful of the nymph, whose wanton eye
 Transfix'd his soul, and kindled amorous flames,
 Chloe, or Phyllis: he each circling glass,
 Wisheth her health, and joy, and equal love,
 Meanwhile, he smokes and laughs at merry tale,
 Or Pun ambiguous, or Conundrum quaint.
 But I, whom griping penury surrounds,
 And hunger, sure attendant upon want,
 With scanty offals, and small acid tiff,
 (Wretched repast!) my meagre corps sustain,
 Then solitary walk, or doze at home
 In garret vile, and with a warming puff,
 Regale chill'd fingers; or from tube as black
 As winter-chimney, or well polish'd jet,
 Exhale Mundungus, ill-perfuming scent.
 Not blacker tube, nor of a shorter size,
 Smokes Cambro-Briton (vers'd in pedigree,

Sprung from Cadwalador and Arthur, Kings
 Full famous in romantic tale) when he
 O'er many a craggy hill and barren cliff,
 Upon a cargo of fam'd Cestrian cheese,
 High over-shadowing rides, with a design
 To vend his wares, or at th' Arvonian mart,
 Or Maridunum, or the ancient town,
 Yclip'd Brechinia, or where Vaga's stream,
 Encircles Ariconium, fruitful soil!
 Whence flow nectareous wines, that well may vie,
 With Massic, Setin, or renown'd Falern.

GEORGE BERKELEY

(1685 - 1753)

GEORGE BERKELEY was born at Dysert Castle, Co. Kilkenny, where his father was an officer of customs. He was educated at Kilkenny School and at Trinity College, Dublin, where he graduated B.A. in 1704, M.A. in 1707, and D.D. in 1721. His career at college was brilliant, though at first his early discovery of his own system of philosophy prevented the college authorities from deciding whether he was dunce or genius. He won his fellowship in 1707, and was tutor, junior dean, and junior Greek lecturer of his college. He went to England in 1713, and soon came to be on friendly terms with Steele, Addison, Arbuthnot, and Swift. In 1713 he went to the Continent as chaplain to the eccentric Lord Peterborough, and travelled as far as Leghorn, but did not stay long. He went abroad again in 1716, as tutor to St. George Ashe, and his stay lasted four years, the greater part of the time being spent in Italy. In 1721 he was appointed chaplain

to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, the Duke of Grafton. By a legacy from Esther Vanhomrigh (Swift's Vanessa) in 1723 his fortune was considerably increased. In 1724 he became Dean of Derry. He now elaborated proposals for providing the American colonies with a better supply of religious teachers, and for the conversion of the American savages to Christianity by the establishment of a college in the Bermuda Islands; and subscriptions having been raised, he set sail for Rhode Island in 1728, proposing to wait there till a promised grant of £20,000 had been got from Government. The scheme, which was excellent but not practicable, never got a start, and Walpole unofficially intimated that the money would not be forthcoming. Accordingly in 1732 Berkeley returned to London, where he stayed about two years. In 1734 he obtained the bishopric of Cloyne, where he spent almost the whole of the remainder of his life, edu-

cating his family with loving care, and promulgating the virtues, in his opinion almost infinite, of tar-water as a universal panacea. It is said that once he was delighted to learn that a sailor's broken leg had been healed by an application of tar and oakum; but on further inquiry it turned out that the leg in question was a wooden one. In the last year of his life he wished to resign his bishopric, but the king forbade him to do so. He relinquished the active duties of his office, however, and accompanied his son to Oxford, where he died suddenly on 14th January, 1753. He was buried in Christ Church.

Berkeley's chief works are: *Essay towards a New Theory of Vision* (1709); a *Treatise concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge* (1710), in which his philosophical theory is fully set forth; *Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous* (1713); *Alciphron, or the Minute Philosopher* (1732); and *Theory of Vision, vindicated and explained* (1733). Another famous work is *Siris, Philosophical Reflections and Inquiries concerning the Virtues of Tar-water* (1744), in which, starting from the somewhat unpromising subject of his favourite fad, he reaches heights of philosophic speculation and eloquence unscaled by anyone since Plato. He also wrote several theological and mathematical works. Berkeley was admirable as a writer; as a man he was said by his friend Pope to be possessed of "every virtue under heaven"; no eighteenth-century writers and few of any period have to the same extent won "golden opinions from all sorts of people". Berkeley's style is full of a subtle and all-

pervading charm; it is both clear and elegant, and may perhaps rank as the best argumentative style in English. He can handle his abstruse subjects so as to attract readers who are not philosophically minded, and can do this without that loss of depth which is apt to characterize popular expositions of unpopular themes. His style is seen at its best in his dialogues, *Hylas and Philonous* and *Alciphron*; its polished dignity makes it not unworthy to be compared with that of Plato. Among philosophers there is none who presents fewer vulnerable points than Berkeley. His three main doctrines are *nominalism*, *immaterialism*, and *acquired visual perception*. In presenting his new theory of vision he maintained that sight gives us nothing beyond sensations that are quite incomplete in themselves, and must be supplemented by sensations derived from the sense of touch, and that sight by itself can tell us nothing of distance. By his idealistic metaphysical theory he maintains that the belief in the existence of an exterior material world is false and inconsistent with itself; that those things which are called *sensible material objects* are not external but exist in the mind, and are merely impressions made on our minds by the immediate act of God, according to certain rules termed *laws of nature*, from which He never deviates; and that the steady adherence of the Supreme Spirit to these rules is what constitutes the reality of things to His creatures, and so effectually distinguishes the ideas perceived by sense from such as are the work of the mind itself or of dreams; that there is no more danger of confounding them together on this

hypothesis than on that of the existence of matter.

[A. Campbell Fraser, *Berkeley: Works, Life, Letters, and Dissertation*;

Berkeley (in *Philosophical Classics*); Sir L. Stephen, *English Thought in the Eighteenth Century*; H. R. Mead, *Bibliography of Berkeley*.]

Alciphron, or the Minute Philosopher

FROM "THE SECOND DIALOGUE"

Next morning Alciphron and Lysicles said the weather was so fine they had a mind to spend the day abroad, and take a cold dinner under a shade in some pleasant part of the country. Whereupon, after breakfast, we went down to a beach about half a mile off; where we walked on the smooth sand, with the ocean on one hand, and on the other wild broken rocks, intermixed with shady trees and springs of water, till the sun began to be uneasy. We then withdrew into a hollow glade, between two rocks, where we had no sooner seated ourselves than Lysicles, addressing himself to Euphranor, said:—I am now ready to perform what I undertook last evening, which was to show there is nothing in that necessary connexion which some men imagine between those principles you contend for, and the public good. I freely own that, if this question was to be decided by the authority of legislators or philosophers, it must go against us. For, those men generally take it for granted that Vice is pernicious to the public; and that men cannot be kept from vice but by the fear of God, and the sense of a Future State; whence they are induced to think the belief of such things necessary to the well-being of human-kind. This false notion hath prevailed for many ages in the world, and done an infinite deal of mischief, being in truth the cause of religious establishments, and gaining the protection and encouragement of laws and magistrates to the clergy and their superstitions. Even some of the wisest among the ancients, who agreed with our sect in denying a Providence and the Immortality of the Soul, had nevertheless the weakness to lie under the common prejudice, that vice was hurtful to societies of men. But England hath of late produced great philosophers, who have undeceived the world, and proved to a demonstration that private vices are public benefits. This discovery was reserved to our times, and our sect hath the glory of it.

Crito.—It is possible some men of fine understanding might in former ages have had a glimpse of this important truth; but it may be presumed they lived in ignorant times and bigoted countries, which were not ripe for such a discovery.

Lysicles.—Men of narrow capacities and short sight, being able to see no further than one link in a chain of consequences, are shocked at small evils which attend upon vice. But those who can enlarge their view, and

look through a long series of events, may behold happiness resulting from vice, and good springing out of evil in a thousand instances. To prove my point, I shall not trouble you with authorities, or far-fetched arguments, but bring you to plain matter of fact. Do but take a view of each particular vice, and trace it through its effects and consequences, and then you will clearly perceive the advantage it brings to the public. Drunkenness, for instance, is by your sober moralists thought a pernicious vice; but it is for want of considering the good effects that flow from it. For, in the first place, it increases the malt tax, a principal branch of his majesty's revenue, and thereby promotes the safety, strength, and glory of the nation. Secondly, it employs a great number of hands, the brewer, the maltster, the ploughman, the dealer in hops, the smith, the carpenter, the brazier, the joiner, with all other artificers necessary to supply those enumerated with their respective instruments and utensils. All which advantages are procured from drunkenness in the vulgar way, by strong beer. This point is so clear it will admit of no dispute. But, while you are forced to allow thus much, I foresee you are ready to object against drunkenness occasioned by wine and spirits, as exporting wealth into foreign countries. But do you not reflect on the number of hands which even this sets on work at home: the distillers, the vintners, the merchants, the sailors, the shipwrights, with all those who are employed towards victualling and fitting out ships, which upon a nice computation will be found to include an incredible variety of trades and callings. Then, for freighting our ships to answer these foreign importations, all our manufacturers throughout the country are employed, the spinners, the weavers, the dyers, the wool-combers, the carriers, the packers. And the same may be said of many other manufacturers, as well as the woollen. And if it be further considered how many men are enriched by all the fore-mentioned ways of trade and business, and the expenses of these men and their families, in all the several articles of convenient and fashionable living, whereby all sorts of trades and callings, not only at home but throughout all parts wherever our commerce reaches, are kept in employment; you will be amazed at the wonderfully-extended scene of benefits which arises from the single vice of drunkenness, so much run down and declaimed against by all grave reformers.

With as much judgment your half-witted folk are accustomed to censure gaming. And indeed, (such is the ignorance and folly of mankind) a gamester and a drunkard are thought no better than public nuisances, when in truth they do each in their way greatly conduce to the public benefit. If you look only on the surface and first appearance of things, you will no doubt think playing at cards a very idle and fruitless occupation. But dive deeper, and you shall perceive this idle amusement employs the card-maker, and he sets the paper-mills at work, by which the poor rag-man is supported; not to mention the builders and workers in wood

and iron that are employed in erecting and furnishing those mills. Look still deeper, and you shall find that candles and chair-hire employ the industrious and the poor, who, by these means, come to be relieved by sharpers and gentlemen, who would not give one penny in charity. But, you will say that many gentlemen and ladies are ruined by play, without considering that what one man loses another gets, and that, consequently, as many are made as ruined: money changeth hands, and in this circulation the life of business and commerce consists. When money is spent, it is all one to the public who spends it. Suppose a fool of quality becomes the dupe of a man of mean birth and circumstance who has more wit? In this case what harm doth the public sustain? Poverty is relieved, ingenuity is rewarded, the money stays at home, and has a lively circulation, the ingenious sharper being enabled to set up an equipage and spend handsomely, which cannot be done without employing a world of people. But you will perhaps object that a man reduced by play may be put upon desperate courses, hurtful to the public. Suppose the worst, and that he turns highwayman; such men have a short life and a merry. While he lives, he spends, and for one that he robs makes twenty the better for his expense. And, when his time is come, a poor family may be relieved by fifty or a hundred pounds set upon his head. A vulgar eye looks on many a man as an idle mischievous fellow, whom a true philosopher, viewing in another light, considers as a man of pleasant occupation, who diverts himself, and benefits the public, and that with so much ease that he employs a multitude of men, and sets an infinite machine in motion, without knowing the good he does, or even intending to do any: which is peculiar to that gentleman-like way of doing good by vice.

I was considering play, and that insensibly led me to the advantages which attend robbing on the highway. Oh the beautiful and never-enough-admired connexion of vices! It would take too much time to show you how they all hang together, and what an infinite deal of good takes its rise from every one of them. One word for a favourite vice, and I shall leave you to make out the rest yourself, by applying the same way of reasoning to all other vices. A poor girl, who might not have the spending of half-a-crown a week in what you call an honest way, no sooner hath the good fortune to be a kept-mistress, but she employs milliners, laundresses, tire-women, mercers, and a number of other trades, to the benefit of her country. It would be endless to trace and pursue every particular vice through its consequences and effects, and show the vast advantage they all are of to the public. The true springs that actuate the great machine of commerce, and make a flourishing state, have been hitherto little understood. Your moralists and divines have for so many ages been corrupting the genuine sense of mankind, and filling their heads with such absurd principles, that it is in the power

of few men to contemplate real life with an unprejudiced eye. And fewer still have sufficient parts and sagacity to pursue a long train of consequences, relations, and dependences, which must be done in order to form a just and entire notion of the public weal. But, as I said before, our sect hath produced men capable of these discoveries, who have displayed them in full light, and made them public for the benefit of their country.

"Oh!" said Euphranor, who heard this discourse with great attention, "you, Lysicles, are the very man I wanted, eloquent and ingenious, knowing in the principles of your sect, and willing to impart them. Pray, tell me, do these principles find an easy admission in the world?"

Lysicles.—They do among ingenious men and people of fashion, though you will sometimes meet with strong prejudices against them in the middle sort, an effect of ordinary talents and mean breeding.

Euphranor.—I should wonder if men were not shocked at notions of such a surprising nature, so contrary to all laws, education, and religion.

Lysicles.—They would be shocked much more if it had not been for the skilful address of our philosophers, who, considering that most men are influenced by names rather than things, have introduced a certain polite way of speaking, which lessens much of the abhorrence and prejudice towards vice.

Euphranor.—Explain me this.

Lysicles.—Thus, in our dialect, a vicious man is a man of pleasure, a sharper is one that plays the whole game, a lady is said to have an affair, a gentleman to be a gallant, a rogue in business to be one that knows the world. By this means, we have no such things as sots, debauchees, whores, rogues, or the like, in the *beau monde*, who may enjoy their vices without incurring disagreeable appellations.

Euphranor.—Vice then is, it seems, a fine thing with an ugly name.

Lysicles.—Be assured it is.

Euphranor.—It should seem then that Plato's fearing lest youth might be corrupted by those fables which represented the gods vicious was an effect of his weakness and ignorance.

Lysicles.—It was, take my word for it.

Euphranor.—And yet Plato had kept good company, and lived in a court! And Cicero, who knew the world well, had a profound esteem for him.

Crito.—I tell you, Euphranor, that Plato and Tully might perhaps make a figure in Athens or Rome; but, were they to revive in our days, they would pass but for underbred pedants, there being at most coffee-houses in London several able men who could convince them they knew nothing in, what they are valued so much for, morals and politics.

Lysicles.—How many long-headed men do I know, both in the court and the city, with five times Plato's sense, who care not one straw what notions their sons have of God or virtue.

DANIEL DEFOE

(? 1659 - 1731)

DANIEL DEFOE was born about 1659 in the parish of St. Giles's, Cripplegate. His father, James Foe, came of a Northamptonshire family, and was a prosperous butcher. Daniel Defoe did not adopt that form of his surname until he was about forty-four years of age. He was educated at a dissenting academy at Newington Green, where, according to his own account, he received a good education—probably all the better because he was originally intended for the dissenting ministry. He soon, however, abandoned this intention, and went into business as a middleman in the stocking trade. He took some share, for which he escaped punishment, in Monmouth's rebellion, and in 1688 joined the army of William of Orange during the march to London. For some years we know little about him, except that he travelled widely, probably in connexion with his business, and that in 1692 he went bankrupt. In 1695 he was appointed accountant to the commissioners of the glass duty, and he also became secretary to a tile factory at Tilbury. His *Essay upon Projects*, a clever pamphlet advocating certain useful reforms, appeared in 1698. He was a keen Williamite, and defended the king from attacks on his foreign nationality by publishing (1701) *The True-born Englishman*, a satire in rugged but vigorous verse, which stresses the fact that the English are a mixed race. Eighty thousand copies of this poem were sold in the streets. Defoe now fairly launched on his

career as pamphlet-writer; it is quite out of the question to mention here even the names of a small percentage of his literally innumerable pamphlets; few of them, however, can have any claim to rank as literature, however valuable they may have been to politicians of their day, and may still be to present-day historians. In 1702 William died, to Defoe's genuine grief; in the same year he published *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters*, a tract which ironically advocated the extirpation of the Non-conformists. This tract was at first hailed by some stupid extremists of the high-flying party as an admirable confession of faith; when they found it was a hoax their rage knew no bound; even the dissenters failed to appreciate the irony of this pamphlet. Defoe was sentenced to pay a fine of two hundred marks, to be imprisoned, and to stand three times in the pillory. That Defoe became earless was a picturesque embellishment of the "hunchback rhymers"; the mob chose to regard him as a martyr for liberty, and pelted him with flowers instead of the usual unsavoury missiles. His *Hymn to the Pillory* is good verse. While still in Newgate, Defoe began his *Review of the Affairs of France and of all Europe as influenced by that Nation*, a periodical which appeared twice or thrice weekly from 17th February, 1704, to 11th June, 1713. Throughout these nine and a quarter years it was written entirely by Defoe, who had been released from

prison in August, 1704, on condition that he should give the services of his pen to Harley. Harley employed him also in secret services of various kinds. His masterly short story, *The True Relation of the Apparition of one Mrs. Veal*, was prefixed to a fourth edition of Drelincourt's *Consolations de l'âme fidèle contre les frayeurs de la mort* in 1706. In this story Defoe displays for the first time his powers of realism and his aptitude for reproducing photographic detail. Defoe played some part behind the scenes in bringing about the union between England and Scotland in 1707; he was in Scotland for about sixteen months, and in 1709 published his *History of the Union*. After his return to England he served Godolphin as he had hitherto served Harley; he was, in fact, dependent on the Government for his liberty and for most of his income, and he had to support it at the cost of suppressing some of his personal opinions. Though he was forced to abandon his support of certain Whig principles, he never ceased opposing the extreme Tories. His attitude of moderate opportunism lost him the favour of both parties. The *Review* was suppressed in 1713, and Defoe was again imprisoned for a short time for writing some ironic anti-Jacobite pamphlets. In 1715 he had a serious illness, was found guilty of libel, and escaped sentence by the somewhat dubious expedient of undertaking to edit certain high-flying periodicals in such a way as to water down their extreme Jacobitism. He used his powers as editor to suppress many articles altogether, and to take the sting out of others. He continued this somewhat shady literary career

for several years, unsuspected by the Tories of being a Government employee.

In the midst of an almost unparalleled amount of journalistic writing, Defoe managed to find time to write his masterpiece, *Robinson Crusoe*, the first part of which appeared on 25th April, 1719. It was inspired to a slight extent by the adventures of the Scottish sailor Alexander Selkirk, whom Defoe had interviewed at Bristol. Its success was instantaneous, and encouraged Defoe to publish, four months later, a second part, which, like most sequels, lacks the charm of its predecessor. Defoe also made use of his success to publish, in 1720, a characteristic collection of moral observations under the title of *Serious Reflections during the life . . . of Robinson Crusoe*. The connexion of this third part with the first and second parts is merely nominal, and it has seldom been reprinted. It is quite unreadable. Defoe, however, had a keen eye for public taste, and published in rapid succession a series of tales, mostly in autobiographical form, which bore some analogy to his masterpiece, as well as tales of rogues, male and female. Chief among such works are: *The Dumb Philosopher* (1719); *The Life and Adventures of Duncan Campbell* (1720); *The Highland Rogue; Captain Singleton* (1720), containing an almost prophetic account of travels in Africa; *Moll Flanders* (1722); *Colonel Jack* (1722); *Journal of the Plague Year* (1722); and *Roxana* (1724). Other works of Defoe's later years include: *The Complete English Tradesman* (1725), a manual of middle-class morality; *The Political History*

of the Devil (1726); *Tour through Great Britain* (1724-6); and *A Plan of English Commerce* (1728). Defoe's last days were unhappy in a somewhat mysterious way. Some of his journalistic dishonesties were exposed, no periodical would accept his writings, he had domestic troubles, and for the last year of his life he seems to have suffered some persecution, real or imaginary. It has been suggested that he was subject to hallucinations. He died in Ropemakers' Alley, Moorfields, on 26th April, 1731, and was buried in Bunhill Fields.

Defoe was considered by his contemporaries, even by those who were well-disposed to him, as a hackney-writer of no great standing. Some of his earlier biographers, in their anxiety to have this decision reversed, overstated their case and made him out to have been a man of marvellous prescience, and a martyr in the cause of liberty. He was, in truth, neither villain nor hero; but a good specimen, in his matter-of-fact air and in his combination of religiosity with no very high standard of personal conduct, of the middle-class Englishman who was beginning to taste political power. His journalistic morality need not be judged by modern standards. The Whigs believed, with some justification, that the Tories wished to plunge the country into all the miseries of a civil war, and considered it lawful to use any

means to prevent this. Defoe does not rank among the greatest stylists; but he ranks quite high, and his style is admirably suited to his purposes. Its vividness is increased by its occasional slipshod expressions, some at least of which may have been purposely inserted. Defoe's genius (for it is nothing less) lies in the photographic accuracy of his details—the "corroborative detail, intended to give artistic verisimilitude to a bald and unconvincing narrative". Once and once only he hit on a story which has delighted young and old, scholar and schoolboy, Englishman and foreigner; but his peculiar power is shown almost as clearly in his *Journal of the Plague Year*, long thought to be the narrative of an eyewitness, as well as in his unedifying tales of rogues and prostitutes. His gift of realism has never been equalled; only less remarkable is the versatility with which, at the age of sixty, he opened up a new vein in literature. His influence upon the development of the novel was great. Once his realistic tales of adventure and episode had appeared, all that was wanting to the novel was a well-constructed plot.

[William Minto, *Daniel Defoe* (English Men of Letters Series); Thomas Wright, *Life of Daniel Defoe*; W. Lee, *Life and Newly Discovered Writings of Daniel Defoe*; W.P. Trent, *Defoe: how to know him*.]

From "Robinson Crusoe"

I improved myself in this time in all the mechanic exercises which my necessities put me upon applying myself to, and I believe I could, upon occasion, have made a very good carpenter, especially considering how few tools I had.

THE
L I F E
And STRANGE SURPRIZING
ADVENTURES
OF
ROBINSON CRUSOE,
Of YORK, MARINER:

Who lived eight and twenty Years all alone in
an un-inhabited Island on the Coast of AMERICA,
near the Mouth of the Great River of *Oroonoque*;

Having been cast on Shore by Shipwreck, where-
in all the Men perished but himself.

With an ACCOUNT how he was at last as
strangely deliver'd by PYRATES.

Written by Himself.

The Second Edition.



L O N D O N: Printed for W. TAYLOR at the
Ship in Pater-Noster-Row. MDCCLXIX.

Besides this, I arrived at an unexpected perfection in my earthenware, and contrived well enough to make them with a wheel, which I found infinitely easier and better; because I made things round and shapeable, which before were filthy things indeed to look on. But I think I was never more vain of my own performance, or more joyful for anything I found out, than for my being able to make a tobacco-pipe; and though it was a very ugly clumsy thing when it was done, and only burned red, like other earthenware, yet as it was hard and firm and would draw the smoke, I was exceedingly comforted with it; for I had been always used to smoke, and there were pipes in the ship, but I forgot them at first, not knowing that there was tobacco on the island; and afterwards, when I searched the ship again, I could not come at any pipes at all.

In my wickerware also I improved much, and made abundance of necessary baskets, as well as my invention showed me, though not very handsome, yet they were such as were very handy and convenient for my laying things up in, or fetching things home in. For example if I killed a goat abroad, I could hang it up in a tree, flay it and dress it, and cut it in pieces, and bring it home in a basket; and the like by a turtle; I would cut it up, take out the eggs, and a piece or two of the flesh, which was enough for me, and bring them home in a basket, and leave the rest behind me. Also large deep baskets were my receivers of my corn, which I always rubbed out as soon as it was dry, and cured, and kept it in great baskets.

I began now to perceive my powder abated considerably, and this was a want which it was impossible for me to supply, and I began seriously to consider what I must do when I should have no more powder, that is to say, how I should do to kill any goat. I had, as is observed, in the third year of my being here, kept a young kid, and bred her up tame, and I was in hopes of getting a he-goat, but I could not by any means bring it to pass, till my kid grew an old goat; and I could never find in my heart to kill her, till she died at last of mere age.

But being now in the eleventh year of my residence, and as I have said, my ammunition growing low, I set myself to study some art to trap and snare the goats, to see whether I could not catch some of them alive, and particularly, I wanted a she-goat great with young.

To this purpose, I made snares to hamper them, and I do believe they were more than once taken in them, but my tackle was not good, for I had no wire, and I always found them broken, and my bait devoured.

At length I resolved to try a pitfall; so I dug several large pits in the earth, in places where I had observed the goats used to feed, and over those pits I placed hurdles, of my own making too, with a great weight upon them; and several times I put ears of barley and dry rice, without setting the trap, and I could easily perceive that the goats had gone in and eaten up the corn, for I could see the marks of their feet. At length

I set three traps in one night, and going the next morning, I found them all standing, and yet the bait eaten and gone. This was very discouraging; however, I altered my traps, and, not to trouble you with particulars, going one morning to see my traps, I found in one of them a large old he-goat, and in one of the others three kids, a male and two females.

As to the old one, I knew not what to do with him, he was so fierce, I durst not go into the pit to him; that is to say, to go about to bring him away alive, which was what I wanted. I could have killed him, but that was not my business, nor would it answer my end; so I e'en let him out, and he ran away, as if he had been frightened out of his wits. But I had forgot then, what I learned afterwards, that hunger will tame a lion. If I had let him stay three or four days without food, and then have carried him some water to drink and then a little corn, he would have been as tame as one of the kids, for they are mighty sagacious, tractable creatures, when they are well used.

However, for the present I let him go, knowing no better at that time; then I went to the three kids, and taking them one by one I tied them with strings together, and with some difficulty brought them all home.

It was a good while before they would feed, but throwing them some sweet corn, it tempted them, and they began to be tame. And now I found that if I expected to supply myself with goat flesh when I had no powder or shot left, breeding some up tame was my only way, when, perhaps, I might have them about my house like a flock of sheep.

But then it presently occurred to me that I must keep the tame from the wild, or else they would always run wild when they grew up; and the only way for this, was to have some enclosed piece of ground, well fenced, either with hedge or pale, to keep them in so effectually, that those within might not break out, or those without break in.

This was a great undertaking for one pair of hands; yet as I saw there was an absolute necessity for doing it, my first piece of work was to find out a proper piece of ground, viz. where there was likely to be herbage for them to eat, water for them to drink, and cover to keep them from the sun.

Those who understand such enclosures will think I had very little contrivance, when I pitched upon a place very proper for all these, being a plain open piece of meadow land, or savannah (as our people call it in the western colonies), which had two or three little drills of fresh water in it, and at one end was very woody; I say, they will smile at my forecast, when I shall tell them I began my enclosing this piece of ground in such a manner, that my hedge or pale must have been at least two miles about. Nor was the madness of it so great as to the compass, for if it was ten miles about, I was like to have time enough to do it in; but I did not consider that my goats would be as wild in so much compass as if they

had had the whole island, and I should have so much room to chase them in, that I should never catch them.

My hedge was begun and carried on, I believe about fifty yards, when this thought occurred to me; so I presently stopped short, and for the first beginning, I resolved to enclose a piece of about 150 yards in length, and 100 yards in breadth, which, as it would maintain as many as I should have in any reasonable time, so, as my stock increased, I could add more ground to my enclosure.

This was acting with some prudence, and I went to work with courage. I was about three months hedging in the first piece, and, till I had done it, I tethered the three kids in the best part of it, and used them to feed as near me as possible, to make them familiar; and very often I would go and carry them some ears of barley or a handful of rice, and feed them out of my hand; so that after my enclosure was finished, and I let them loose, they would follow me up and down, bleating after me for a handful of corn.

This answered my end, and in about a year and a half, I had a flock of about twelve goats, kids and all; and in two years more, I had three and forty, beside several that I took and killed for my food. And after that I enclosed five several pieces of ground to feed them in, with little pens to drive them into, to take them as I wanted, and gates out of one piece of ground into another.

But this was not all, for now I not only had goat's flesh to feed on when I pleased, but milk too, a thing which, indeed, in my beginning, I did not so much as think of, and which, when it came into my thoughts, was really an agreeable surprise. For now I set up my dairy, and had sometimes a gallon or two of milk in a day. And as Nature, who gives supplies of food to every creature, dictates even naturally how to make use of it, so I, that had never milked a cow, much less a goat, or seen butter or cheese made, very readily and handily, though after a great many essays and miscarriages, made me both butter and cheese at last, and never wanted it afterwards.

How mercifully can our Creator treat his creatures, even in those conditions in which they seemed to be overwhelmed in destruction! How can He sweeten the bitterest providences, and give us cause to praise Him for dungeons and prisons! What a table was here spread for me in a wilderness, where I saw nothing at first, but to perish for hunger!

From the "Journal of the Plague Year"

It is here, however, to be observed, that after the funerals became so many that people could not toll the bell, mourn, or weep, or wear black for one another, as they did before; no, nor so much as make coffins

for those that died; so, after a while, the fury of the infection appeared to be so increased that, in short, they shut up no houses at all; it seemed enough that all the remedies of that kind had been used till they were found fruitless, and that the plague spread itself with an irresistible fury; so that, as the fire the succeeding year spread itself and burnt with such violence, that the citizens, in despair, gave over their endeavours to extinguish it, so in the plague, it came at last to such violence, that the people sat still looking at one another, and seemed quite abandoned to despair. Whole streets seemed to be desolated, and not to be shut up only, but to be emptied of their inhabitants; doors were left open, windows stood shattering with the wind, in empty houses, for want of people to shut them; in a word, people began to give themselves up to their fears, and to think that all regulations and methods were in vain, and that there was nothing to be hoped for but an universal desolation; and it was even in the height of this general despair that it pleased God to stay his hand, and to slacken the fury of the contagion, in such a manner as was even surprising, like its beginning, and demonstrated it to be his own particular hand; and that above, if not without the agency of means, as I shall take notice of in its proper place.

But I must still speak of the plague, as in its height, raging even to desolation, and the people under the most dreadful consternation, even, as I have said, to despair. It is hardly credible to what excesses the passions of men carried them in this extremity of the distemper; and this part, I think, was as moving as the rest. What could affect a man in his full power of reflection, and what could make a deeper impression on the soul, than to see a man, almost naked, and got out of his house, or perhaps out of his bed into the street, come out of Harrow-alley (a populous conjunction or collection of alleys, courts, and passages, in the Butcher-row in White-chapel)—I say, what could be more affecting, than to see this poor man come out into the open street, run, dancing and singing, and making a thousand antic gestures, with five or six women and children running after him, crying and calling upon him, for the Lord's sake, to come back, and entreating the help of others to bring him back, but all in vain, nobody daring to lay a hand upon him, or to come near him?

This was a most grievous and afflicting thing to me, who saw it all from my own windows; for all this while the poor afflicted man was, as I observed it, even then in the utmost agony of pain, having as they said, two swellings upon him, which could not be brought to break or to suppurate; but by laying strong caustics on them, the surgeons had, it seems, hopes to break them, which caustics were then upon him, burning his flesh as with a hot iron. I cannot say what became of this poor man, but I think he continued roving about in that manner till he fell down and died.

From "Moll Flanders"

Wandering thus about, I knew not whither, I passed by an apothecary's shop in Leadenhall Street, where I saw lie on a stool just before the counter a little bundle wrapped in a white cloth; beyond it stood a maid-servant with her back to it, looking up towards the top of the shop, where the apothecary's apprentice, as I suppose, was standing upon the counter, with his back also to the door, and a candle in his hand, looking and reaching up to the upper shelf, for something he wanted, so that both were engaged, and nobody else in the shop.

This was the bait; and the devil who laid the snare prompted me, as if he had spoke, for I remember, and shall never forget it, 'twas like a voice spoken over my shoulder, "Take the bundle; be quick; do it this moment." It was no sooner said but I stepped into the shop, and with my back to the wench, as if I had stood up for a cart that was going by, I put my hand behind me and took the bundle, and went off with it, the maid or fellow not perceiving me, or any one else.

It is impossible to express the horror of my soul all the while I did it. When I went away I had no heart to run, or scarce to mend my pace. I crossed the street indeed, and went down the first turning I came to, and I think it was a street that went through into Fenchurch Street; from thence I crossed and turned through so many ways and turnings that I could never tell which way it was, nor where I went; I felt not the ground I stepped on, and the farther I was out of danger, the faster I went, till, tired and out of breath, I was forced to sit down on a little bench at a door, and then found I was got into Thames Street, near Billingsgate. I rested me a little and went on; my blood was all in a fire; my heart beat as if I was in a sudden fright. In short, I was under such a surprise that I knew not whither I was agoing, or what to do.

After I had tired myself thus with walking a long way about, and so eagerly, I began to consider, and make home to my lodging, where I came about nine o'clock at night.

What the bundle was made up for, or on what occasion laid where I found it, I knew not, but when I came to open it, I found there was a suit of childbed-linen in it, very good, and almost new, the lace very fine; there was a silver porringer of a pint, a small silver mug, and six spoons, with some other linen, a good smock, and three silk handkerchiefs, and in the mug a paper, 18s. 6d. in money.

All the while I was opening these things I was under such dreadful impressions of fear, and in such terror of mind, though I was perfectly safe, that I cannot express the manner of it. I sat me down, and cried most vehemently. "Lord," said I, "what am I now? a thief! Why, I shall be taken next time, and be carried to Newgate, and be tried for

my life!" And with that I cried again a long time, and I am sure, as poor as I was, if I had durst for fear, I would certainly have carried the things back again; but that went off after a while. Well, I went to bed for that night, but slept but little; the horror of the fact still was upon my mind, and I knew not what I said or did all night, and all the next day. Then I was impatient to hear some news of the loss; and would fain know how it was, whether they were a poor body's goods, or a rich. "Perhaps," said I, "it may be some poor widow like me, that had packed up these goods to go and sell them for a little bread for herself and a poor child, and are now starving and breaking their hearts for want of that little they would have fetched." And this thought tormented me worse than all the rest, for three or four days.

SIR RICHARD STEELE

(1672 - 1729)

RICHARD STEELE was born in Dublin in March, 1672. His father, who was a prosperous attorney, died in 1676. Steele was brought up by an uncle, who was private secretary to the Duke of Ormond. At the age of twelve he went to Charterhouse, where he first met his great friend and collaborator Addison. He entered Christ Church, Oxford, in 1690, afterwards migrating to Merton. His friend Addison was at this time a demy of Magdalen. Steele left Oxford abruptly without a degree in 1694, and enlisted as a trooper in the Horse Guards. His poem on the death of Queen Mary (*The Procession*) gained him an ensigncy in the Coldstream Guards, and he commanded a company before 1700. In that year he fought a duel with a Captain Kelly, whom he wounded severely. This misadventure inspired Steele to write a religious pamphlet, *The Christian Hero* (1701). This publication did not make Steele a favourite in his

mess, and to rehabilitate his character as a wit he wrote a comedy, *The Funeral: or, Grief à la Mode* (1701). His other plays were: *The Lying Lover* (1703), based on Corneille's *Menteur*; *The Tender Husband* (1705), based on Molière's *Sicilien*; and *The Conscious Lovers* (1722), his best play, based upon Terence's *Andria*. The theatre was not Steele's medium, and though his plays follow the spirit of the age, as voiced by Collier, in being more virtuous and sentimental than the comedies of Congreve and Vanbrugh, they can only be accounted qualified successes. Some of his characters, nevertheless, gave hints to Goldsmith and Sheridan. After an unsuccessful search for the philosopher's stone, Steele took to journalism as providing a more certain means of livelihood. In 1707 he was appointed gazetteer, and edited *The Gazette*, a colourless official production, which probably was an irksome task to one of his

impetuous nature. *The Tatler* appeared on 12th April, 1709, and continued to appear thrice weekly until 2nd January, 1711, when for some mysterious reason, probably political, it stopped. Addison joined Steele in this venture; and Steele afterwards said: "I fared like a distressed prince, who calls in a powerful neighbour to his aid; I was undone by my auxiliary; when I had once called him in, I could not subsist without dependence on him." Of the two hundred and seventy-one numbers of *The Tatler*, Steele wrote one hundred and eighty-eight and Addison only forty-two. The more celebrated *Spectator* appeared daily (Sundays excepted) from 1st March, 1711, to 6th December, 1712. Of its five hundred and fifty-five numbers, Steele wrote two hundred and thirty-six and Addison two hundred and seventy-four. Although the literary value of *The Spectator* is greater than that of its predecessor, *The Tatler* tells us more about the life of the day. Behind both papers there was a genuine determination to reform the manners and what might be termed the minor morals of men and women; this was done with great success, in the easiest and happiest way. The sale of *The Spectator* was enormous for those days, reaching fourteen thousand copies at its highest. Both papers catered specially for the intellectual needs of the middle-classes, who were now rising into a position of importance, and for the tastes of women. *The Spectator* was followed by *The Guardian* (1713), *The Englishman* (1713), *The Lover* (1714), *The Reader* (1714), and the less known *Town Talk*, *Tea Table*,

Chit Chat, *Plebeian*, and *Theatre*. Steele, as a sturdy Whig, prospered after the accession of the Hanoverian dynasty. He became a justice of the peace and Deputy-Lieutenant of Middlesex, and was knighted in 1715. He was also appointed supervisor of the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane. His not very happy excursions into politics need not be noticed here; he was not a competent pamphleteer, and had the misfortune to range himself against Swift, who knew every weak spot in his armour. Steele was always in monetary difficulties, though he was twice married (1705 and 1707) and received a small fortune with both his wives. His second wife, Mary Scurlock ("dearest Prue"), to whom over four hundred of his letters are preserved in the British Museum, died in 1718. Addison, with whom he had had a painful quarrel, died in the following year, so his last days were sad and lonely. He retired to Carmarthen, broken and paralysed, in 1724, and died there five years later.

Steele is little remembered as a dramatist and not at all as a pamphleteer. His fame rests and rests securely upon his essays; but it is not easy to disentangle it from the fame of Addison. They were ideally matched as literary partners. Each was the exact complement of the other; it was "the very marriage of pro with con". Steele was rash, erratic, and original; Addison prudent, reflective, and painstaking. Steele was more inventive than Addison, and Addison more effective than Steele. Criticism has done scant justice to Steele by emphasizing the difference between his preaching and his practice.

Addison's fame eclipsed that of his collaborator for many years; Steele's advocates, when in due course they appeared, not unnaturally overstated their case. In some ways Steele was greater than Addison; he was more modest, more warm-hearted, and more human. As a literary figure, however, though one

of the earliest, wisest, and wittiest of English essayists, he ranks quite definitely below his "auxiliary".

[Austin Dobson, *Richard Steele* (English Worthies Series); G. A. Aitken, *Life of Richard Steele*; J. Forster, *Historical and Biographical Essays*, Vol. II.]

The Spectator

NO. 2. FRIDAY, MARCH 2, 1711

The first of our society is a gentleman of Worcestershire, of ancient descent, a baronet, his name Sir Roger de Coverley. His great-grandfather was inventor of that famous country-dance which is called after him. All who know that shire are very well acquainted with the parts and merits of Sir Roger. He is a gentleman that is very singular in his behaviour, but his singularities proceed from his good sense, and are contradictions to the manners of the world only as he thinks the world is in the wrong. However, this humour creates him no enemies, for he does nothing with sourness or obstinacy, and his being unconfined to modes and forms makes him but the readier and more capable to please and oblige all who know him. When he is in town he lives in Soho Square: it is said he keeps himself a bachelor by reason he was crossed in love by a perverse beautiful widow of the next county to him. Before this disappointment, Sir Roger was what you call a fine gentleman, had often supped with my Lord Rochester and Sir George Etherege, fought a duel upon his first coming to town, and kicked Bully Dawson in a public coffee-house for calling him youngster. But being ill-used by the above-mentioned widow, he was very serious for a year and a half; and though, his temper being naturally jovial, he at last got over it, he grew careless of himself, and never dressed afterwards; he continues to wear a coat and doublet of the same cut that were in fashion at the time of his repulse, which, in his merry humours, he tells us has been in and out twelve times since he first wore it. He is now in his fifty-sixth year, cheerful, gay, and hearty; keeps a good house both in town and country; a great lover of mankind; but there is such a mirthful cast in his behaviour that he is rather beloved than esteemed: his tenants grow rich, his servants look satisfied, all the young women profess to love him, and the young men are glad of his company. When he comes into a house he calls the servants by their names, and talks all the way upstairs to a visit. I must not omit that

Sir Roger is a Justice of the Quorum; that he fills the chair at a Quarter Session with great abilities, and three months ago gained universal applause by explaining a passage in the Game Act.

The gentleman next in esteem and authority among us is another bachelor, who is a member of the Inner Temple; a man of great probity, wit, and understanding; but he has chosen his place of residence rather to obey the direction of an old humorous father than in pursuit of his own inclinations. He was placed there to study the laws of the land, and is the most learned of any of the House in those of the stage. Aristotle and Longinus are much better understood by him than Littleton or Coke. The father sends up every post questions relating to marriage-articles, leases, and tenures in the neighbourhood; all which questions he agrees with an attorney to answer and take care of in the lump. He is studying the passions themselves when he should be inquiring into the debates among men which arise from them. He knows the argument of each of the orations of Demosthenes and Tully, but not one case in the reports of our own courts. No one ever took him for a fool, but none, except his intimate friends, know he has a great deal of wit. This turn makes him at once both disinterested and agreeable. As few of his thoughts are drawn from business, they are most of them fit for conversation. His taste of books is a little too just for the age he lives in; he has read all, but approves of very few. His familiarity with the customs, manners, actions, and writings of the ancients makes him a very delicate observer of what occurs to him in the present world. He is an excellent critic, and the time of the play is his hour of business; exactly at five he passes through New Inn, crosses through Russell Court, and takes a turn at Will's until the play begins. He has his shoes rubbed and his periwig powdered at the barber's as you go into the Rose. It is for the good of the audience when he is at a play, for the actors have an ambition to please him.

The person of next consideration is Sir Andrew Freeport, a merchant of great eminence in the city of London: a person of indefatigable industry, strong reason, and great experience. His notions of trade are noble and generous, and, as every rich man has usually some sly way of jesting which would make no great figure were he not a rich man, he calls the sea the British Common. He is acquainted with commerce in all its parts, and will tell you that it is a stupid and barbarous way to extend dominion by arms; for true power is to be got by arts and industry. He will often argue, that if this part of our trade were well cultivated we should gain from one nation; and if another, from another. I have heard him prove that diligence makes more lasting acquisitions than valour, and that sloth has ruined more nations than the sword. He abounds in several frugal maxims, among which the greatest favourite is "A penny saved is a penny got". A general trader of good sense is pleasanter company than a

general scholar; and Sir Andrew having a natural unaffected eloquence, the perspicuity of his discourse gives the same pleasure that wit would in another man. He has made his fortunes himself, and says that England may be richer than other kingdoms by as plain methods as he himself is richer than other men; though at the same time I can say this of him, that there is not a point in the compass but blows home a ship in which he is an owner.

Next to Sir Andrew in the club-room sits Captain Sentry, a gentleman of great courage, good understanding, but invincible modesty. He is one of those that deserve very well, but are very awkward at putting their talents within the observation of such as should take notice of them. He was some years a captain, and behaved himself with great gallantry in several engagements and at several sieges; but having a small estate of his own, and being next heir of Sir Roger, he has quitted a way of life in which no man can rise suitably to his merit who is not something of a courtier as well as a soldier. I have heard him often lament that, in a profession where merit is placed in so conspicuous a view, impudence should get the better of modesty. When he has talked to this purpose I never heard him make a sour expression, but frankly confess that he left the world because he was not fit for it. A strict honesty, and an even, regular behaviour are in themselves obstacles to him that must press through crowds who endeavour at the same end with himself, the favour of a commander. He will, however, in his way of talk excuse generals for not disposing according to men's desert, or inquiring into it; "For," says he, "that great man who has a mind to help me has as many to break through to come at me as I have to come at him." Therefore he will conclude that the man who would make a figure, especially in a military way, must get over all false modesty, and assist his patron against the importunity of other pretenders by a proper assurance in his own vindication. He says it is a civil cowardice to be backward in asserting what you ought to expect, as it is a military fear to be slow in attacking when it is your duty. With this candour does the gentleman speak of himself and others. The same frankness runs through all his conversation. The military part of his life has furnished him with many adventures in the relation of which he is very agreeable to the company; for he is never overhearing, though accustomed to command men in the utmost degree below him; nor ever too obsequious, from a habit of obeying men highly above him.

But that our society may not appear a set of humorists unacquainted with the gallantries and pleasures of the age, we have among us the gallant Will Honeycomb, a gentleman who according to his years should be in the decline of his life, but having ever been very careful of his person, and always had a very easy fortune, time has made but very little impression, either by wrinkles on his forehead or traces in his brain. His person is

well turned, of a good height. He is very ready at that sort of discourse with which men usually entertain women. He has all his life dressed very well, and remembers habits as others do men. He can smile when one speaks to him, and laughs easily. He knows the history of every mode, and can inform you from which of the French king's wenches our wives and daughters had this manner of curling their hair, that way of placing their hoods; whose frailty was covered by such a sort of petticoat, and whose vanity to show her foot made that part of the dress so short in such a year. In a word, all his conversation and knowledge has been in the female world: as other men of his age will take notice to you what such a minister said upon such and such an occasion, he will tell you when the Duke of Monmouth danced at court such a woman was then smitten, another was taken with him at the head of his troop in the Park. In all these important relations, he has ever about the same time received a kind glance or a blow of a fan from some celebrated beauty, mother of the present Lord such-a-one. If you speak of a young Commoner that said a lively thing in the House, he starts up, "He has good blood in his veins, Tom Mirabell begot him, the rogue cheated me in that affair; that young fellow's mother used me more like a dog than any woman I ever made advances to." This way of talking of his very much enlivens the conversation among us of a more sedate turn; and I find there is not one of the company but myself, who rarely speak at all, but speaks of him as of that sort of man who is usually called a well-bred fine gentleman. To conclude his character, where women are not concerned he is an honest worthy man.

I cannot tell whether I am to account him whom I am next to speak of as one of our company, for he visits us but seldom, but when he does it adds to every man else a new enjoyment of himself. He is a clergyman, a very philosophic man, of general learning, great sanctity of life, and the most exact good breeding. He has the misfortune to be of a very weak constitution, and consequently cannot accept of such cares and business as preferments in his function would oblige him to; he is therefore among divines what a chamber-counsellor is among lawyers. The probity of his mind and the integrity of his life create him followers, as being eloquent or loud advances others. He seldom introduces the subject he speaks upon; but we are so far gone in years that he observes, when he is among us, an earnestness to have him fall on some divine topic, which he always treats with much authority, as one who has no interests in this world, as one who is hastening to the object of all his wishes, and conceives hope from his decays and infirmities. These are my ordinary companions.

NO. 41. TUESDAY, APRIL 17, 1711

Compassion for the gentleman who writes the following letter should not prevail upon me to fall upon the fair sex, if it were not that I find they are frequently fairer than they ought to be. Such impostures are not to be tolerated in civil society; and I think his misfortune ought to be made public, as a warning for other men always to examine into what they admire.

"SIR—Supposing you to be a person of general knowledge, I make my application to you on a very particular occasion. I have a great mind to be rid of my wife, and hope, when you consider my case, you will be of opinion I have very just pretensions to a divorce. I am a mere man of the town, and have very little improvement but what I have got from plays. I remember in *The Silent Woman* the learned Dr. Cutbeard, or Dr. Otter (I forget which), makes one of the causes of separation to be *error personae*, when a man marries a woman and finds her not to be the same woman whom he intended to marry, but another. If that be law, it is, I presume, exactly my case. For you are to know, Mr. Spectator, that there are women who do not let their husbands see their faces till they are married.

Not to keep you in suspense, I mean plainly that part of the sex who paint. They are some of them so exquisitely skilful this way, that give them but a tolerable pair of eyes to set up with, and they will make bosom, lips, cheeks, and eyebrows by their own industry. As for my dear, never man was so enamoured as I was of her fair forehead, neck, and arms, as well as the bright jet of her hair; but to my great astonishment, I find they were all the effect of art; her skin is so tarnished with this practice, that when she first wakes in a morning, she scarce seems young enough to be the mother of her whom I carried to bed the night before. I shall take the liberty to part with her by the first opportunity, unless her father will make her portion suitable to her real, not her assumed, countenance. 'This I thought fit to let him and her know by your means. I am, Sir, your most obedient humble Servant.'

I cannot tell what the law or the parents of the lady will do for this injured gentleman, but must allow he has very much justice on his side. I have, indeed, very long observed this evil, and distinguished those of our women who wear their own from those in borrowed complexions, by the Picts and the British. There does not need any great discernment to judge which are which. The British have a lively animated aspect; the Picts, though never so beautiful, have dead uninformed countenances. The muscles of a real face sometimes swell with soft passion, sudden surprise, and are flushed with agreeable confusions, according as the object before them, or the ideas presented to them, affect their imagination. But the Picts behold all things with the same air, whether they are joyful or sad; the same fixed insensibility appears upon all occasions. A Pict, though she takes all that pains to invite the approach of lovers, is obliged to keep them at a certain distance; a sigh in a languishing lover, if fetched

too near her, would dissolve a feature; and a kiss snatched by a forward one, might transfer the complexion of the mistress to the admirer. It is hard to speak of these false fair ones, without saying something uncomplaisant, but I would only recommend to them to consider how they like coming into a room new painted; they may assure themselves, the near approach of a lady who used this practice is much more offensive.

Will Honeycomb told us, one day, an adventure he once had with a Pict. This lady had wit, as well as beauty, at will; and made it her business to gain hearts, for no other reason but to rally the torments of her lovers. She would make great advances to ensnare men, but without any manner of scruple break off when there was no provocation. Her ill-nature and vanity made my friend very easily proof against the charms of her wit and conversation; but her beauteous form, instead of being blemished by her falsehood and inconstancy, every day increased upon him, and she had new attractions every time he saw her. When she observed Will irrevocably her slave, she began to use him as such, and after many steps toward such a cruelty she at last utterly banished him. The unhappy lover strove in vain, by servile epistles, to revoke his doom; till at length he was forced to the last refuge, a round sum of money to her maid. This corrupt attendant placed him early in the morning behind the hangings in her mistress's dressing-room. He stood very conveniently to observe, without being seen. The Pict begins the face she is designed to wear that day, and I have heard him protest she had worked a full half-hour before he knew her to be the same woman. As soon as he saw the dawn of that complexion, for which he had so long languished, he thought fit to break from his concealment, repeating that of Cowley:

Th' adorning thee with so much art
Is but a barb'rous skill;
'Tis like the pois'ning of a dart
Too apt before to kill.

The Pict stood before him in the utmost confusion, with the prettiest smirk imaginable on the finished side of her face, pale as ashes on the other. Honeycomb seized all her gallipots and washes, and carried off his handkerchief full of brushes, scraps of Spanish wool, and phials of unguents. The lady went into the country; the lover was cured.

It is certain no faith ought to be kept with cheats, and an oath made to a Pict is of itself void. I would therefore exhort all the British ladies to single them out, nor do I know any but Lindamira who should be exempt from discovery; for her own complexion is so delicate, that she ought to be allowed the covering it with paint, as a punishment, for choosing to be the worst piece of art extant, instead of the masterpiece of nature. As for my part, who have no expectations from women, and consider them only as they are part of the species, I do not half so much

fear offending a beauty as a woman of sense; I shall therefore produce several faces which have been in public this many years, and never appeared; it will be a very pretty entertainment in the playhouse (when I have abolished this custom) to see so many ladies, when they first lay it down, incog. in their own faces.

In the meantime, as a pattern for improving their charms, let the sex study the agreeable Statira. Her features are enlivened with the cheerfulness of her mind, and good humour gives an alacrity to her eyes. She is graceful without affecting an air, and unconcerned without appearing careless. Her having no manner of art in her mind, makes her want none in her person.

How like is this lady, and how unlike is a Pict, to that description Dr. Donne gives of his mistress?

Her pure and eloquent blood
Spoke in her cheeks, and so distinctly wrought,
That one would almost say her body thought.

ADVERTISEMENT

A YOUNG GENTLEWOMAN of about nineteen years of age (bred in the family of a person of quality lately deceased), who paints the finest flesh-colour, wants a place, and is to be heard of at the house of Minheer Grotesque, a Dutch painter in Barbican.

N.B. She is also well skilled in the drapery part, and puts on hoods and mixes ribbons so as to suit the colours of the face with great art and success.

JOSEPH ADDISON

(1672 – 1719)

JOSEPH ADDISON was born at Milston, near Amesbury, Wiltshire, on 1st May, 1672. His father, Dr. Lancelot Addison, was then rector of Milston, and eleven years later became Dean of Lichfield. Addison was educated at schools at Amesbury and Salisbury, and at Charterhouse, where he first met Steele. At the age of fifteen he entered Queen's College, Oxford, and two years later was elected to a demyship at Magdalen, whose flourishing

condition at that time was in part the reward of its defiance of the tyranny of King James II. Addison took his M.A. degree in 1693, and was elected to a full fellowship five years later. He was a good but not a profound scholar; he was intimately acquainted with all the Latin poets, even the least worthy, but his knowledge of Latin prose-writers was much slighter, and with Greek authors, even the most celebrated, he did not greatly

concern himself. He first won fame with his original Latin poems, which are gracefully written compositions on such subjects as a puppet-show, a barometer, and the war between the cranes and the pygmies. A poem addressed to Dryden, then the literary dictator of England, won him the friendship of the veteran poet and extended his fame beyond academic circles. To Dryden's translation of Virgil he contributed a somewhat superficial essay on the *Georgics*, and himself translated parts of the fourth book of Virgil's poem. Dryden, with his usual modesty, spoke deprecatingly of his own rendering when compared with Addison's.

The obvious next step in Addison's career was to take holy orders; he was dissuaded from doing so by Charles Montague, afterwards Earl of Halifax. Halifax and Somers decided to secure for their party the services of so accomplished a writer and so staunch a Whig; the rise of the importance of the pamphlet made it necessary for politicians to procure literary men to write for them. They secured for Addison a pension of £300 a year, in order that he might travel, learn French, and fit himself for a diplomatic career. He left England late in 1699, spent a year in France, made the acquaintance of Boileau and Malebranche, and travelled throughout Italy. His principal pleasure lay in seeing the scenery described by his beloved Roman poets. His best poem, his *Letter from Italy*, was written as he crossed the Alps, and was addressed to Halifax. The death of William III put an end for the time being to his

hopes of a public career, but he continued to travel, and wrote at Vienna his *Dialogues on Medals*, a work which is too scholarly for the ordinary reader and too slight for the scholar. It was not published until after his death.

He returned to England, after four years' absence, in 1703, and remained for a year without employment. His *Remarks on Several Parts of Italy* was published in 1705. Soon after his return he was elected a member of the Kitcat Club, and, in spite of his bashfulness in society, became well known to all the prominent Whigs. His poem on the battle of Blenheim, *The Campaign*, procured him an appointment as Commissioner of Appeal on Excise in succession to Locke. *The Campaign* is no better than many official poems, but it is written in skilfully-wrought couplets, and at least avoids the egregious error of representing Marlborough, like a Homeric hero, slaying his enemies with his strong right arm. It lays stress upon the coolness and generalship of its hero, and is, on the whole, written in good taste. In 1706 he received an under-secretaryship of state, and in 1707 went, in the capacity of secretary, with Halifax (and Vanbrugh) to invest the Elector of Hanover with the Order of the Garter. In 1709 he became secretary to the Viceroy of Ireland, the notorious Earl of Wharton, and was appointed keeper of the records at Dublin. His opera *Fair Rosamond*, an attempt to oust Italian opera by providing an English substitute, was not a success, as the composer did not do justice to the libretto. When set to music by Arne, fourteen years after

Addison's death, it won the success it deserved. Addison also showed his interest in the stage by assisting Steele with his *Tender Husband*. In 1708 he was elected Member of Parliament for Lostwithiel; he afterwards exchanged this seat for Malmesbury, which place he continued to represent until his death. His *Whig Examiner* (five numbers, 1710) attacked the Tories vigorously but unsuccessfully; the fall of the Whigs cost Addison his various offices, but gave him, to the great benefit of mankind, more leisure to devote to literature. From October, 1709, to January, 1711, he contributed forty-two papers to *The Tatler*, besides assisting Steele with thirty-four. For *The Spectator* (1st March, 1711, to 6th December, 1712) he wrote two hundred and seventy-four papers, all signed by one of the four letters, C., L., I., O. There is no doubt that Addison's contributions to *The Spectator* are his chief title to fame, as well as the chief cause of the periodical's unprecedented success. His best character is undoubtedly Sir Roger de Coverley, whom he killed, some say, lest the coarser hand of Steele should rub any of the bloom off his creation; but Will Honeycomb is almost as well drawn, and there are countless admirable sketches of minor characters. The graver papers, published on Saturdays to induce in readers a suitable frame of mind for Sundays, are admirably done; the critical essays, once considered excellent, are scarcely up to the standard of the others, and were in some cases not specially written for *The Spectator*, but were resuscitated from Addison's literary lumber-room. Addison now turned his attention to tragedy. Many

years before, while on his travels, he had written four acts of a tragedy, *Cato*, inspired perhaps by a ridiculous play on that subject which he had witnessed at Venice. He added a somewhat perfunctory fifth act, and had the play produced at Drury Lane on 14th April, 1713. It is a well-written but unimpassioned tragedy on classical lines, and has few admirers to-day. Its success at the time was very great; but this was largely due to the political situation. It has many references to Liberty; every reference was greeted with cheers from the Whigs and counter-cheers from the Tories, each party being, in its own estimation, the sole guardian of Liberty. It ran for twenty nights, and was translated into French, Italian, German, and Latin. Addison's other contributions to periodicals included fifty-one papers to *The Guardian*, a periodical which ruined itself by its excessive political zeal, between May and September, 1713; twenty-four papers to a revived *Spectator* conducted by Budgell; and two papers to Steele's *Lover*. His unsuccessful comedy *The Drummer* was produced anonymously in 1715. On the death of Queen Anne, he successively became secretary to the lords justices, secretary to the Irish viceroy, and one of the lords commissioners of trade. His *Freeholder* (fifty-five papers, from 23rd December, 1715, to 9th June, 1716) contains his last literary work. This periodical was political, being intended to allay the dangerous situation created by the rebellion of 1715. It contains some of Addison's best work, and, considering the circumstances of its origin, is studiously moderate in

tone. In August, 1716, he married the Dowager Countess of Warwick; the marriage is usually said, but without any just cause, to have been unhappy. In 1717 Addison reached the summit of his career by being appointed Secretary of State; but by this time his health was failing, and he was unable to discharge the heavy duties of his office. He retired after a tenure of eleven months in 1718; his pension was £1500. He meditated writing a tragedy on the death of Socrates; he wrote part of an unsatisfactory defence of Christianity; and he intended to paraphrase the Psalms. His last days were embittered by a political quarrel with his old friend Steele. Before it could be healed he died, of asthma and dropsy, on 17th June, 1719. He was buried by lamplight in Westminster Abbey.

Addison's essays, his chief title to fame, are charming and delightful in themselves, and are of great importance for the influence which they had, not merely upon literature but upon life and manners. The proverb *abeunt studia in mores* applies to the first readers of *The*

Spectator with more than its usual aptness. Macaulay has done justice to this aspect of Addison's work when he speaks of "the great satirist, who alone knew how to use ridicule without abusing it, who, without inflicting a wound, effected a great social reform, and who reconciled wit and virtue, after a long and disastrous separation, during which wit had been led astray by profligacy, and virtue by fanaticism". Addison was a master of humour, but he indulged in no personalities, his wit wounded no one, and he never tried to raise a smile by an indelicate innuendo. As Johnson says, "his prose is the model of the middle style; on grave subjects not formal, on light occasions not grovelling". Johnson concludes his eulogy with the well-known words, "Whoever wishes to attain an English style, familiar but not coarse, and elegant but not ostentatious, must give his days and nights to the volumes of Addison".

[Lucy Aikin, *Life of Joseph Addison*; W. J. Courthope, *Addison* (English Men of Letters Series); O. Elton, *The Augustan Ages*.]

The Spectator

NO. 112. MONDAY, JULY 9, 1711

I am always very well pleased with a country Sunday, and think if keeping holy the seventh day were only a human institution, it would be the best method that could have been thought of for the polishing and civilizing of mankind. It is certain the country people would soon degenerate into a kind of savages and barbarians, were there not such frequent returns of a stated time in which the whole village meet together with their best faces, and in their cleanliest habits, to converse with one another upon indifferent subjects, hear their duties explained to them, and join together in adoration of the Supreme Being. Sunday clears

away the rust of the whole week, not only as it refreshes in their minds the notions of religion, but as it puts both the sexes upon appearing in their most agreeable forms, and exerting all such qualities as are apt to give them a figure in the eye of the village. A country fellow distinguishes himself as much in the churchyard, as a citizen does upon the Change, the whole parish politics being generally discussed in that place either after sermon or before the bell rings.

My friend Sir Roger, being a good churchman, has beautified the inside of his church with several texts of his own choosing; he has likewise given a handsome pulpit-cloth, and railed in the communion table at his own expense. He has often told me, that at his coming to his estate he found his parishioners very irregular; and that in order to make them kneel and join in the responses, he gave every one of them a hassock and a communion prayer-book: and at the same time employed an itinerant singing master, who goes about the country for that purpose, to instruct them rightly in the tunes of the psalms; upon which they now very much value themselves, and indeed outdo most of the country churches that I have ever heard.

As Sir Roger is landlord to the whole congregation, he keeps them in very good order, and will suffer nobody to sleep in it besides himself; for if by chance he has been surprised into a short nap at sermon, upon recovering out of it he stands up and looks about him, and if he sees anybody else nodding, either wakes them himself, or sends his servants to them. Several other of the old knight's particularities break out upon these occasions: sometimes he will be lengthening out a verse in the singing-psalms, half a minute after the rest of the congregation have done with it; sometimes, when he is pleased with the matter of his devotion, he pronounces *Amen* three or four times to the same prayer; and sometimes stands up when everybody else is upon their knees, to count the congregation, or see if any of his tenants are missing.

I was yesterday very much surprised to hear my old friend, in the midst of the service, calling out to one John Matthews to mind what he was about, and not disturb the congregation. This John Matthews it seems is remarkable for being an idle fellow, and at that time was kicking his heels for his diversion. This authority of the knight, though exerted in that odd manner which accompanies him in all circumstances of life, has a very good effect upon the parish, who are not polite enough to see any thing ridiculous in his behaviour; besides that the general good sense and worthiness of his character makes his friends observe these little singularities as foils that rather set off than blemish his good qualities.

As soon as the sermon is finished, nobody presumes to stir till Sir Roger has gone out of the church. The knight walks down from his seat in the chancel between a double row of his tenants, that stand bowing to him on each side; and every now and then inquires how such an one's

wife, or mother, or son, or father do, whom he does not see at church; which is understood as a secret reprimand to the person that is absent.

The chaplain has often told me, that upon a catechizing day, when Sir Roger has been pleased with a boy that answers well, he has ordered a bible to be given him next day for his encouragement; and sometimes accompanies it with a flitch of bacon to his mother. Sir Roger has likewise added five pounds a year to the clerk's place; and that he may encourage the young fellows to make themselves perfect in the church service, has promised, upon the death of the present incumbent, who is very old, to bestow it according to merit.

The fair understanding between Sir Roger and his chaplain, and their mutual concurrence in doing good, is the more remarkable, because the very next village is famous for the differences and contentions that rise between the parson and the 'squire, who live in a perpetual state of war. The parson is always preaching at the 'squire, and the 'squire to be revenged on the parson never comes to church. The 'squire has made all his tenants atheists, and tithe-stealers; while the parson instructs them every Sunday in the dignity of his order, and insinuates to them in almost every sermon that he is a better man than his patron. In short matters are come to such an extremity, that the 'squire has not said his prayers either in public or private this half year; and that the parson threatens him, if he does not mend his manners, to pray for him in the face of the whole congregation.

Feuds of this nature, though too frequent in the country, are very fatal to the ordinary people; who are so used to be dazzled with riches, that they pay as much deference to the understanding of a man of an estate, as of a man of learning: and are very hardly brought to regard any truth, how important soever it may be, that is preached to them, when they know there are several men of five hundred a year who do not believe it.

No. 517. THURSDAY, OCT. 23, 1712

We last night received a piece of ill news at our club, which very sensibly afflicted every one of us. I question not but my readers themselves will be troubled at the hearing of it. To keep them no longer in suspense, Sir Roger de Coverley *is dead*. He departed this life at his house in the country, after a few weeks' sickness. Sir Andrew Freeport has a letter from one of his correspondents in those parts, that informs him the old man caught a cold at the county sessions, as he was very warmly promoting an address of his own penning, in which he succeeded according to his wishes. But this particular comes from a Whig justice of peace, who was always Sir Roger's enemy and antagonist. I have letters both from the chaplain and Captain Sentry which mention nothing

of it, but are filled with many particulars to the honour of the good old man. I have likewise a letter from the butler, who took so much care of me last summer when I was at the knight's house. As my friend the butler mentions, in the simplicity of his heart, several circumstances the others have passed over in silence, I shall give my reader a copy of his letter, without any alteration or diminution.

"HONOURED SIR,

"Knowing that you was my old master's good friend, I could not forbear sending you the melancholy news of his death, which has afflicted the whole country, as well as his poor servants, who loved him, I may say, better than we did our lives. I am afraid he caught his death the last county-sessions, where he would go to see justice done to a poor widow woman, and her fatherless children, that had been wronged by a neighbouring gentleman; for you know, sir, my good master was always the poor man's friend. Upon his coming home, the first complaint he made was, that he had lost his roast-beef stomach, not being able to touch a sirloin, which was served up according to custom; and you know he used to take great delight in it. From that time forward he grew worse and worse, but still kept a good heart to the last. Indeed we were once in great hope of his recovery, upon a kind message that was sent him from the widow lady whom he had made love to the forty last years of his life, but this only proved a lightning before death. He has bequeathed to this lady, as a token of his love, a great pearl necklace, and a couple of silver bracelets set with jewels, which belonged to my good old lady his mother: he has bequeathed the fine white gelding, that he used to ride a hunting upon, to his chaplain, because he thought he would be kind to him, and has left you all his books. He has, moreover, bequeathed to the chaplain a very pretty tennement with good lands about it. It being a very cold day when he made his will, he left for mourning, to every man in the parish, a great frize-coat, and to every woman a black riding-hood. It was a most moving sight to see him take leave of his poor servants, commending us all for our fidelity, whilst we were not able to speak a word for weeping. As we most of us are grown grey-headed in our dear master's service, he has left us pensions and legacies, which we may live very comfortably upon the remaining part of our days. He has bequeathed a great deal more in charity, which is not yet come to my knowledge, and it is peremptorily said in the parish, that he has left money to build a steeple to the church; for he was heard to say some time ago that if he lived two years longer, Coverley church should have a steeple to it. The chaplain tells everybody that he made a very good end, and never speaks of him without tears. He was buried, according to his own directions, among the family of the Coverleys, on the left hand of his father Sir Arthur. The coffin was carried by six of his tenants, and the pall held up by six of the *quorum*: the whole parish followed the corpse with heavy hearts, and in their mourning suits, the men in frize, and the women in riding-hoods. Captain Sentry, my master's nephew, has taken possession of the hall-house, and the whole estate. When my old master saw him a little before his death, he shook him by the hand, and wished him joy of the estate which was falling to him, desiring him only to make good use of it, and to pay the several legacies, and the gifts of charity which he told him he had left as quit-rents upon the estate. The Captain truly seems a courteous man, though he says but little. He makes much of those whom my master loved,

and shews great kindness to the old house-dog, that you know my poor master was so fond of. It would have gone to your heart to have heard the moans the dumb creature made on the day of my master's death. He has never joyed himself since; no more has any of us. 'Twas the melancholiest day for the poor people that ever happened in Worcestershire. This is all from,

"Honoured Sir, your most sorrowful servant,

"EDWARD BISCUIT.

"P.S.—My master desired, some weeks before he died, that a book which comes up to you by the carrier, should be given to Sir Andrew Freepport, in his name."

This letter, notwithstanding the poor butler's manner of writing it, gave us such an idea of our good old friend, that upon the reading of it there was not a dry eye in the club. Sir Andrew, opening the book, found it to be a collection of acts of parliament. There was in particular the Act of Uniformity, with some passages in it marked by Sir Roger's own hand. Sir Andrew found that they related to two or three points, which he had disputed with Sir Roger the last time he appeared at the club. Sir Andrew, who would have been merry at such an incident on another occasion, at the sight of the old man's hand-writing, burst into tears, and put the book into his pocket. Captain Sentry informs me, that the knight has left rings and mourning for every one in the club.

NO. 235. THURSDAY, NOV. 29, 1711

There is nothing which lies more within the province of a Spectator than public shows and diversions: and as, among these, there are none which can pretend to vie with those elegant entertainments that are exhibited in our theatres, I think it particularly incumbent on me to take notice of every thing that is remarkable in such numerous and refined assemblies.

It is observed, that of late years there has been a certain person in the upper gallery of the play-house, who, when he is pleased with any thing that is acted upon the stage, expresses his approbation by a loud knock upon the benches or the wainscot, which may be heard over the whole theatre. This person is commonly known by the name of the trunk-maker in the upper gallery. Whether it be that the blow he gives on these occasions resembles that which is often heard in the shops of such artisans, or that he was supposed to have been a real trunk-maker, who, after the finishing of his day's work, used to unbend his mind at these public diversions with his hammer in his hand, I cannot certainly tell. There are some, I know, who have been foolish enough to imagine it is a spirit which haunts the upper gallery, and from time to time makes those strange noises; and the rather because he is observed to be louder than

ordinary every time the ghost of Hamlet appears. Others have reported that it is a dumb man, who has chosen this way of uttering himself when he is transported with any thing he sees or hears. Others will have it to be the play-house thunderer, that exerts himself after this manner in the upper gallery, when he has nothing to do upon the roof.

But having made it my business to get the best information I could in a matter of this moment, I find that the trunk-maker, as he is commonly called, is a large black man, whom no body knows. He generally leans forward on a huge oaken plant, with great attention to every thing that passes upon the stage. He is never seen to smile; but upon hearing any thing that pleases him, he takes up his staff with both hands and lays it upon the next piece of timber that stands in his way with exceeding vehemence; after which he composes himself in his former posture, till such time as something new sets him again at work.

It has been observed, his blow is so well timed, that the most judicious critic would never except against it. As soon as any shining thought is expressed in the poet, or any uncommon grace appears in the actor, he smites the bench or wainscot. If the audience does not concur with him, he smites a second time, and if the audience is not yet awaked, looks around him with great wrath, and repeats the blow a third time, which never fails to produce the clap. He sometimes lets the audience begin the clap of themselves, and at the conclusion of their applause ratifies it with a single thwack.

He is of so great use to the play-house, that it is said a former director of it, upon his not being able to pay his attendance by reason of sickness, kept one in pay to officiate for him till such time as he recovered; but the person so employed, though he laid about him with incredible violence, did it in such wrong places, that the audience soon found that it was not their old friend the trunk-maker.

It has been remarked that he has not yet exerted himself with vigour this season. He sometimes plies at the opera: and upon Nicolini's first appearance, was said to have demolished three benches in the fury of his applause. He has broken half a dozen oaken plants upon Dogget, and seldom goes away from a tragedy of Shakespear without leaving the wainscot extremely shattered.

The players do not only connive at his obstreperous approbation, but very cheerfully repair at their own cost whatever damages he makes. They had once a thought of erecting a kind of wooden anvil for his use, that should be made of a very sounding plank, in order to render his strokes more deep and mellow; but as this might not have been distinguished from the music of a kettle-drum, the project was laid aside.

In the mean while, I cannot but take notice of the great use it is to an audience, that a person should thus preside over their heads like the

director of a concert, in order to awaken their attention, and beat time to their applauses; or, to raise my simile, I have sometimes fancied the trunk-maker in the upper gallery to be like Virgil's ruler of the wind, seated upon the top of a mountain, who when he struck his sceptre upon the side of it, roused an hurricane, and set the whole cavern in an uproar.

It is certain the trunk-maker has saved many a good play, and brought many a graceful actor into reputation, who would not otherwise have been taken notice of. It is very visible,—as the audience is not a little abashed, if they find themselves betrayed into a clap, when their friend in the upper gallery does not come into it, so the actors do not value themselves upon the clap, but regard it as a mere *brutum fulmen*, or empty noise, when it has not the sound of the oaken plant in it. I know it has been given out by those who are enemies to the trunk-maker, that he has sometimes been bribed to be in the interest of a bad poet or a vicious player; but this is a surmise which has no foundation; his strokes are always just, and his admonitions seasonable; he does not deal about his blows at random, but always hits the right nail upon the head. The inexpressible force wherewith he lays them on sufficiently shows the evidence and strength of his conviction. His zeal for a good author is indeed outrageous, and breaks down every fence and partition, every board and plank, that stands within the expression of his applause.

As I do not care for terminating my thoughts in barren speculations, or in reports of pure matter of fact, without drawing something from them for the advantage of my countrymen, I shall take the liberty to make an humble proposal, that whenever the trunk-maker shall depart this life, or whenever he shall have lost the spring of his arm by sickness, old age, infirmity, or the like, some able-bodied critic should be advanced to this post, and have a competent salary settled on him for life, to be furnished with bamboos for operas, crab-tree cudgels for comedies, and oaken plants for tragedy, at the public expense. And to the end that this place should be always disposed of according to merit, I would have none preferred to it who has not given convincing proofs both of a sound judgment and a strong arm, and who could not, upon occasion, either knock down an ox, or write a comment upon Horace's Art of Poetry. In short, I would have him a due composition of Hercules and Apollo, and so rightly qualified for this important office, that the trunk-maker may not be missed by our posterity.

ALEXANDER POPE

(1688 -- 1744)

ALEXANDER POPE was born in London on 21st May, 1688. His father was a Roman Catholic linen-draper of Lombard Street; his mother's maiden name was Edith Turner, and she was of a good middle-class family. He was the only child of the marriage, and both his parents were nearly fifty years of age when he was born. He inherited a tendency to nervous headaches from his mother, and a feeble frame from his father. His delicacy of health was greatly increased by his precocious application to study. Owing to his health or his religion or both he did not attend any good school or college, but was sent to one or two small Catholic schools, and received private tuition from one or two incompetent Catholic priests. He was thus largely self-taught, and, although he assimilated much knowledge of various kinds and was indefatigable in his devotion to his books, he was never a scholar. His religion closed the learned professions to him, and his physique rendered him unfit for commercial life, so he early decided to devote himself to literature, after a brief attempt to become efficient as a painter. His genius lay in an infinite capacity for taking pains, and at a very early age he set himself to acquire a perfect style. His father adopted a wise policy of non-interference, being always ready to help his brilliant son, but never anxious to dictate to him.

While still at school he wrote a

play based on Ogilby's translation of the *Iliad*, and an epic called *Alcander, Prince of Rhodes*. Both these compositions are lost. He made the acquaintance of the dramatist Wycherley, his senior by nearly half a century, who encouraged him to write pastorals, and of the critic Walsh, who recommended him to write "correctly", a piece of advice which he never forgot. Pope corrected Wycherley's *Miscellany Poems* (1704), and long afterwards published his correspondence with the aged dramatist, after editing it so as to make his own conduct appear in a favourable light. Pope apprenticed himself to the art of poetry with the greatest ardour. He studied widely, and experimented in translating and adapting. Dryden, whom he had once seen, was his model, and in imitation of him he "translated" some Chaucer, *The Merchant's Tale*, *The Wife of Bath's Prologue*, and *The House of Fame*, and made a version of the first book of the *Thebais* of Statius to set against Dryden's *Aeneid*. It is typical of the not impeccable taste of the age that Statius was ranked as the equal of Virgil. Work of this kind increased his powers, and developed his great natural gifts as a metrist. His *Pastorals* were published in 1709 in a miscellany which included similar work by Ambrose Philips, whom Pope afterwards held up to ridicule in *The Guardian* and (following Henry Carey, q.v.)

immortalized as "Narnby Pamby" in *The Dunciad*. The *Essay on Criticism* appeared in 1711; it is an astonishingly mature poem, for Pope was only twenty-one when he wrote and twenty-three when he published it. It is full of sound precepts and brilliantly written. It was not intended, as some critics seem to suppose, to supersede Aristotle and Horace; it was intended to express in the choicest language some of the commonplaces of contemporary criticism, and could not have attained its object more fully than it has done. *The Messiah*, a sacred eclogue, written in imitation of Virgil's fourth eclogue, appeared in 1712 as No. 378 of *The Spectator*. It was in its time a much-admired poem, but it reads to-day somewhat like a copy of verses sent in for the Seatonian Prize. *The Rape of the Lock* appeared in its original form in 1712; in 1714 it appeared in its final and greatly improved form, with the "machinery" of sylphs and gnomes added. Hardly any poet at any time could amalgamate his second and his first thoughts so happily as Pope. Robert, seventh Baron Petre, had cut off a lock of Miss Arabella Fermor's hair, and the poem was intended to heal the breach in friendship between the two families (both Catholic), who were estranged by this action. *The Rape of the Lock*, which was written in imitation of Boileau's *Lutrin*, far surpassed its model, and remains the greatest of mock-heroic poems. It was the first poem to impress upon the French the fact that they had not the entire monopoly of exquisitely finished and dainty workmanship. It is therefore curious to find the French critic Taine doing signal

injustice to this poem. *Windsor Forest*, an artificial poem of no great merit, appeared in 1713. About this time Pope commenced his life-long friendship with Swift.

In 1713 Pope definitely embarked upon the enterprise of translating Homer. This work was to be published by subscription, and most of the eminent men of the day gave their support to the undertaking, which was considered a work of national importance. The *Iliad* was published between 1715 and 1720, and the *Odyssey* in 1725 and 1726. The translation of the *Iliad* was entirely the work of Pope, though the notes were by different hands; Elijah Fenton translated four books of the *Odyssey*, and William Broome eight. In neither case were these books consecutive. Pope's treatment of his collaborators was not so ungenerous as it has been made out to be, as it was entirely to his name that the enterprise owed its success. He cleared nearly £9000 by his Homer, this being the first instance in English literature of a substantial fortune made by a man of letters. He invested his money securely, and lived in comfort for the rest of his life. Opinions will always differ as to the merits of Pope's translation; most critics will agree with Bentley, who said, "A pretty poem, Mr. Pope, but you must not call it Homer". Sir Leslie Stephen said that Pope's ignorance of Greek was "an awkward qualification for a translator of Homer", but the ignorance of how to write good English verse displayed by most other Homeric translators is a qualification hardly less awkward. Other translations cannot be called Homer either, and few of them can be called pretty

poems. Pope's translation, though it has been called "Homer in a tie-wig", has the merit of being readable. His *Iliad* is undoubtedly far better than his *Odyssey*, as the heroic couplet could cope far better with the battle-scenes of the earlier than with the domesticities of the later poem. Whatever benefit Pope conferred upon literature by translating Homer, the effect of his translation upon his own work was entirely salutary. From his labours he gained something of the strength and complete mastery over his materials that Shakespeare gained by writing his English historical plays.

In 1725 Pope published an edition of Shakespeare's plays in six volumes, for which he was paid £217, 12s. He was in many ways singularly ill-fitted for this task, being without many of the qualities required by a Shakespearean editor. He was especially lacking in patience. Still, he made many improvements in the text and many acute suggestions in his notes. Pope's Shakespeare had the effect of embroiling him in a quarrel with Lewis Theobald, the critic, who became the hero of *The Dunciad*, which first appeared in 1728. In a later edition—fourteen years later—Theobald was dethroned, and the laureate, Colley Cibber, reigned in his stead. *The Dunciad* cannot be reckoned a very entertaining poem nowadays. It is so full of personalities that it ranks as a lampoon rather than as a satire, and much of its venom is directed against men who should have been beneath Pope's notice, the unfortunates of Grub Street who prostituted their minds for hire. Pope's eminent victims were unwisely selected; Theobald was

an accomplished textual critic, Cibber a highly entertaining man, even though unworthy of the annual tierce of canary, and Bentley the first classical scholar of that age. *The Dunciad* shows Pope's gifts as a consummate craftsman as clearly as any of his works, but it is not a pleasant poem to read, nor does it increase our respect for Pope, who, we feel, abused in it his great powers to gratify his personal spite against those whom he considered to be his enemies. Pope's *Essay on Man* (1733) was largely an exposition of the clear but shallow philosophy of Lord Bolingbroke, which was called by the irreverent "The New Gospel according to St. John". It is brilliantly written, and full of phrases which have become part of the language. Its orthodoxy was ably defended by Warburton, who became the accepted commentator upon the works of Pope. The *Moral Essays* and *Imitations of Horace* contain much of Pope's best work, though they are marred to some extent by too much bitterness. No poems in all English literature are more vigorous and terse.

The transactions which led up to the publication of Pope's letters are tortuous and complicated beyond unravelling here. The facts were investigated by C. W. Dilke with exemplary patience; his investigation is, in fact, one of the best pieces of detective work ever done in literary criticism. Briefly it may be said that a "spurious" edition which was not spurious appeared in 1735, and a "genuine" edition which was not genuine in 1737. The letters are not interesting, having been in some cases written with a view to publication, and in most cases too carefully edited by their

author. As documents for establishing the facts of Pope's life they have been so falsified as to be worthless.

Pope's feeble body was that of a middle-aged man before he was thirty; at forty he was an old man. He lived to be fifty-six, passing peacefully away on 30th May, 1744. It is a wonder that he lived so long, and that he died, as he himself said, "of a hundred good symptoms". For many years he was so weak that he had to wear a bodice of stiff canvas; three pairs of stockings concealed the tenuity of his legs. In making an estimate of Pope as a man and as an author it is necessary always to bear in mind his physical infirmities, his *mens torta in corpore torto*. It was his deformed body which made him supersensitive, and it was his supersensitiveness which made him so unforgiving an enemy. His good qualities were numerous and vital; he was a devoted son to both father and mother, a faithful friend to those who were faithful to him, and honourably independent as a literary man. The worst of his faults was vanity, which made him conceal the amount of sheer hard work some of his poems cost him, and caused him to attribute to his extreme youth work done or at any rate revised at a later date. Honourable in his private life, when it came to literary transactions Pope adopted a tortuous policy usually associated in the English mind with the followers of Ignatius Loyola. Pope lived in an age of venom, when party feeling ran higher than it had done before or has done since. He was a bitter controversialist because all his contemporaries were bitter, though less able. He would have

been a better artist had he remembered Bentley's dictum that no man was ever written out of reputation but by himself.

As a poet Pope was long immoderately praised, and then the tide turned and he was unduly depreciated. He has been attacked as a corrupter of taste and the founder of a school of machine-made poetry. The truth is that he was the chief ornament and culminating point of a school rather than its head or founder. He was not a literary dictator like Ben Jonson or his namesake Samuel; he did not wield the bludgeon, but the rapier, though, like that of Laertes, it was "unbated and envenomed". Pope simply brought to perfection the poetical methods of Waller, Dryden, and others. As regards metre, his services to the heroic couplet were like those of Ovid to the elegiac couplet. He gave it a polish and an air of easiness; after he had written it became easy for any competent literary workman to write passably good couplets. He was a scrupulous reviser of his work, as careful as Tennyson, and a better self-critic. His work could hardly be bettered; he has provided us with a multitude of quotations, as apt as those of his favourite Horace. In an artificial age, somewhat given to foppery, he had the good taste to translate the world's greatest epic poet and to edit the world's greatest dramatic poet. True, he performed neither task well, but his attempt shows the natural vigour of his mind. As a master of writing he has hardly an equal. He could always say exactly what he wanted to say in the most telling way possible. That he did not always want to

say what was true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report does not lessen his merits as a stylist. His keen, incisive lines will live when much so-called "natural" poetry has been forgotten.

[Sir L. Stephen, *Pope* (English Men of Letters Series); C. W. Dilke, *The Papers of a Critic*;

W. J. Courthope, *The Life of Alexander Pope*; O. Elton, *The Augustan Ages*; J. Dennis, *The Age of Pope*; George Paston, *Mr. Pope, his Life and Times*; Edith Sitwell, *Alexander Pope*. The best edition is that of Elwin and Courthope, which is based on material collected by J. W. Croker (q.v.).]

From the "Essay on Criticism"

But most by Numbers judge a Poet's song,
And smooth or rough, with them is right or wrong:
In the bright Muse though thousand charms conspire
Her voice is all these tuneful fools admire;
Who haunt Parnassus but to please their ear,
Not mend their minds; as some to Church repair,
Not for the doctrine, but the music there.
These equal syllables alone require,
Tho' oft the ear the open vowels tire,
While expletives their feeble aid do join;
And ten low words oft creep in one dull line:
While they ring round the same unvary'd chimes,
With sure returns of still expected rhymes;
Where-e'er you find "the cooling western breeze,"
In the next line, it "whispers through the trees,"
If crystal streams "with pleasing murmurs creep,"
The reader's threaten'd (not in vain) with "sleep:"
Then, at the last and only couplet fraught
With some unmeaning thing they call a thought,
A needless Alexandrine ends the song
That, like a wounded snake, drags its slow length along.
Leave such to tune their own dull rhymes, and know
What's roundly smooth or languishingly slow;
And praise the easy vigour of a line,
Where Denham's strength, and Waller's sweetness join.
True ease in writing comes from art, not chance,
As those move easiest who have learn'd to dance.
'Tis not enough no harshness gives offence,
The sound must seem an Echo to the sense:
Soft is the strain when Zephyr gently blows,
And the smooth stream in smoother numbers flows:

But when loud surges lash the sounding shore,
 The hoarse, rough verse should like the torrent roar;
 When Ajax strives some rock's vast weight to throw,
 The line too labours, and the words move slow;
 Not so, when swift Camilla scours the plain,
 Flies o'er th' unbending corn, and skims along the main.
 Hear how Timotheus' varied lays surprise,
 And bid alternate passions fall and rise!
 While, at each change, the son of Libyan Jove
 Now burns with glory, and then melts with love,
 Now his fierce eyes with sparkling fury glow,
 Now sighs steal out, and tears begin to flow;
 Persians and Greeks like turns of nature found,
 And the world's victor stood subdu'd by Sound!
 The pow'r of Music all our hearts allow,
 And what Timotheus was, is DRYDEN now.

(*Lines 337-383.*)

From "The Rape of the Lock"

Canto III

The Peer now spreads the glitt'ring Forfex wide,
 T' enclose the Lock; now joins it, to divide.
 Ev'n then, before the fatal engine clos'd,
 A wretched Sylph too fondly interpos'd;
 Fate urg'd the shears, and cut the Sylph in twain,
 (But airy substance soon unites again)

The meeting points the sacred hair dis sever
 From the fair head, for ever, and for ever!

Then flash'd the living lightning from her eyes,
 And screams of horror rend th' affrighted skies.
 Not louder shrieks to pitying heav'n are cast,
 When husbands, or when lapdogs breathe their last;
 Or when rich China vessels fall'n from high,
 In glitt'ring dust and painted fragments lie!

Let wreaths of triumph now my temples twine,
 (The victor cry'd) the glorious Prize is mine!
 While fish in streams, or birds delight in air,
 Or in a coach and six the British Fair,
 As long as Atalantis shall be read,
 Or the small pillow grace a Lady's bed,
 While visits shall be paid on solemn days,

When num'rous wax-lights in bright order blaze,
 While nymphs take treats, or assignations give,
 So long my honour, name, and praise shall live!
 What Time would spare, from Steel receives its date.
 And monuments, like men, submit to fate!
 Steel could the labour of the Gods destroy,
 And strike to dust th' imperial Tow'rs of Troy;
 Steel could the works of mortal pride confound,
 And hew triumphal arches to the ground.
 What wonder then, fair nymph! thy hairs should feel,
 The conqu'ring force of unresisted steel?

(Lines 147-178.)

From the "Essay on Man"

Epistle I

Heav'n from all creatures hides the book of Fate,
 All but the page prescrib'd, their present state:
 From brutes what men, from men what spirits know?
 Or who could suffer Being here below?
 The lamb thy riot dooms to bleed to-day,
 Had he thy Reason, would he skip and play?
 Pleas'd to the last, he crops the flow'ry food,
 And licks the hand just rais'd to shed his blood.
 Oh blindness to the future! kindly giv'n,
 That each may fill the circle mark'd by Heav'n:
 Who sees with equal eye, as God of all,
 A hero perish, or a sparrow fall,
 Atoms or systems, into ruin hurl'd,
 And now a bubble burst, and now a world.

Hope humbly then; with trembling pinions soar;
 Wait the great teacher Death; and God adore.
 What future bliss, he gives not thee to know,
 But gives that Hope to be thy blessing now.
 Hope springs eternal in the human breast:
 Man never Is, but always To be blest:
 The soul, uneasy and confin'd from home,
 Rests and expatiates in a life to come.

Lo, the poor Indian! whose untutor'd mind
 Sees God in clouds, or hears him in the wind;
 His soul, proud Science never taught to stray
 Far as the solar walk, or milky way;

Yet simple Nature to his hope has giv'n,
 Behind the cloud-topt hill, an humbler heav'n;
 Some safer world in depth of woods embrac'd,
 Some happier island in the watry waste,
 Where slaves once more their native land behold,
 No fiends torment, no Christians thirst for gold.
 To Be, contents his natural desire,
 He asks no Angel's wing, no Seraph's fire;
 But thinks, admitted to that equal sky,
 His faithful dog shall bear him company.

(*Lines 77-112.*)

From the "Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot"

But why then publish? Granville the polite,
 And knowing Walsh, would tell me I could write;
 Well-natur'd Garth inflam'd with early praise;
 And Congreve lov'd, and Swift endur'd my lays;
 The courtly Talbot, Somers, Sheffield read;
 Ev'n mitred Rochester would nod the head,
 And St. John's self (great Dryden's friends before)
 With open arms receiv'd one Poet more.
 Happy my studies, when by these approv'd!
 Happier their author, when by these belov'd!
 From these the world will judge of men and books,
 Not from the Burnets, Oldmixons, and Cookes.

Soft were my numbers; who could take offence,
 While pure Description held the place of Sense?
 Like gentle Fanny's was my flow'ry theme,
 A painted mistress, or a purling stream.
 Yet then did Gildon draw his venal quill;—
 I wish'd the man a dinner, and sat still.
 Yet then did Dennis rave in furious fret;
 I never answer'd,—I was not in debt.
 If want provok'd, or madness made them print,
 I wag'd no war with Bedlam or the Mint.

Did some more sober Critic come abroad;
 If wrong, I smil'd; if right, I kiss'd the rod.
 Pains, reading, study, are their just pretence,
 And all they want is spirit, taste, and sense.
 Commas and points they set exactly right,
 And 'twere a sin to rob them of their mite.

Yet ne'er one sprig of laurel grac'd these ribalds,
 From slashing Bentley down to piddling Tibalds;
 Each wight, who reads not, and but scans and spells,
 Each Word-catcher, that lives on syllables,
 Ev'n such small Critics some regard may claim,
 Preserv'd in Milton's or in Shakespeare's name.
 Pretty! in amber to observe the forms
 Of hairs, or straws, or dirt, or grubs, or worms!
 The things, we know, are neither rich nor rare,
 But wonder how the devil they got there.

Were others angry: I excus'd them too;
 Well might they rage, I gave them but their due.
 A man's true merit 'tis not hard to find;
 But each man's secret standard in his mind,
 That Casting-weight pride adds to emptiness,
 This, who can gratify? for who can guess?
 The Bard whom pilfer'd Pastorals renown,
 Who turns a Persian tale for half a Crown,
 Just writes to make his barrenness appear,
 And strains, from hard-bound brains, eight lines a year:
 He, who still wanting, tho' he lives on theft,
 Steals much, spends little, yet has nothing left:
 And He, who now to sense, now nonsense leaning,
 Means not, but blunders round about a meaning:
 And He, whose fustian's so sublimely bad,
 It is not Poetry, but prose run mad:
 All these, my modest Satire bade translate,
 And own'd that nine such Poets made a 'Tate,
 How did they fume, and stamp, and roar, and chafe!
 And swear, not ADDISON himself was safe.

Peace to all such! but were there One whose fires
 True Genius kindles, and fair Fame inspires;
 Blest with each talent and each art to please,
 And born to write, converse, and live with ease:
 Should such a man, too fond to rule alone,
 Bear, like the Turk, no brother near the throne.
 View him with scornful, yet with jealous eyes,
 And hate for arts that caus'd himself to rise;
 Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer,
 And without sneering, teach the rest to sneer;
 Willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike,
 Just hint a fault, and hesitate dislike;
 Alike reserv'd to blame, or to commend,
 A tim'rous foe, and a suspicious friend;

Dreading ev'n fools, by Flatterers besieg'd,
 And so obliging, that he ne'er oblig'd;
 Like Cato, give his little Senate laws,
 And sit attentive to his own applause;
 While Wits and Templars ev'ry sentence raise,
 And wonder with a foolish face of praise:—
 Who but must laugh, if such a man there be?
 Who would not weep, if ATTICUS were he?

(Lines 135-214.)

From "The Dunciad"

Before them march'd that awful Aristarch;
 Plough'd was his front with many a deep Remark
 His Hat, which never vail'd to human pride,
 Walker with rev'rence took, and laid aside.
 Low bow'd the rest: He, kingly, did but nod,
 So upright Quakers please both Man and God.
 Mistress! dismiss that rabble from your throne:
 Avaunt—is Aristarchus yet unknown?
 Thy mighty Scholiast, whose unweary'd pains
 Made Horace dull, and humbled Milton's strains
 Turn what they will to Verse, their toil is vain,
 Critics like me shall make it Prose again.
 Roman and Greek Grammarians! know your Better
 Author of something yet more great than Letter;
 While tow'ring o'er your Alphabet, like Saul,
 Stands our Digamma, and o'er-tops them all.
 'Tis true, on Words is still our whole debate,
 Disputes of *Me* or *Te*, of *aut* or *at*,
 To sound or sink in *cano*, O or A,
 Or give up Cicero to C or K.
 Let Freind affect to speak as Terence spoke,
 And Alsop never but like Horace joke:
 For me, what Virgil, Pliny may deny,
 Manilius or Solinus shall supply:
 For Attic Phrase in Plato let them seek,
 I poach in Suidas for unlicens'd Greek.
 In ancient Sense if any needs will deal,
 Be sure I give them Fragments, not a Meal;
 What Gellius or Stobaeus hash'd before,
 Or chew'd by blind old Scholiasts o'er and o'er.

The critic Eye, that microscope of Wit,
 Sees hairs and pores, examines bit by bit:
 How parts relate to parts, or they to whole,
 The body's harmony, the beaming soul,
 Are things which Kuster, Burman, Wasse shall see,
 When man's whole frame is obvious to a Flea.

(Book IV, lines 203-238.)

In vain, in vain—the all-composing Hour
 Resistless falls: the Muse obeys the Pow'r.
 She comes! she comes! the sable Throne behold
 Of Night primeval and of Chaos old!
 Before her, Fancy's gilded clouds decay,
 And all its varying Rain-bows die away.
 Wit shoots in vain its momentary fires,
 The meteor drops, and in a flash expires.
 As one by one, at dread Medea's strain,
 The sick'ning stars fade off th' ethereal plain;
 As Argus' eyes by Hermes' wand oppress,
 Clos'd one by one to everlasting rest;
 Thus at her felt approach, and secret might,
 Art after Art goes out, and all is Night.
 See skulking Truth to her old cavern fled,
 Mountains of Casuistry heap'd o'er her head!
 Philosophy, that lean'd on Heav'n before,
 Shrinks to her second cause, and is no more.
 Physic of Metaphysic begs defence,
 And Metaphysic calls for aid on Sense!
 See Mystery to Mathematics fly!
 In vain! they gaze, turn giddy, rave, and die.
 Religion blushing veils her sacred fires,
 And unawares Morality expires.
 For public Flame, nor private, dares to shine;
 Nor human Spark is left, nor Glimpse divine!
 Lo! thy dread Empire, CHAOS! is restor'd;
 Light dies before thy uncreating word;
 Thy hand, great Anarch! lets the curtain fall,
 And universal Darkness buries All.

(Book IV, lines 627-656.)

From "The Iliad"

The troops exulting sat in order round,
 And beaming fires illumined all the ground.
 As when the moon, refulgent lamp of night,
 O'er heaven's pure azure spreads her sacred light,
 When not a breath disturbs the deep serene,
 And not a cloud o'ercasts the solemn scene,
 Around her throne the vivid planets roll,
 And stars unnumber'd gild the glowing pole,
 O'er the dark trees a yellower verdure shed,
 And tip with silver every mountain's head:
 Then shine the vales, the rocks in prospect rise,
 A flood of glory bursts from all the skies:
 The conscious swains, rejoicing in the sight,
 Eye the blue vault, and bless the useful light.
 So many flames before proud Ilion blaze,
 And lighten glimmering Xanthus with their rays.
 The long reflections of the distant fires
 Gleam on the walls, and tremble on the spires.
 A thousand piles the dusky horrors gild,
 And shoot a shady lustre o'er the field.
 Full fifty guards each flaming pile attend,
 Whose umber'd arms, by fits, thick flashes send,
 Loud neigh the coursers o'er their heaps of corn,
 And ardent warriors wait the rising morn.

(*Book VIII, lines 553-565 in the Greek.*)

JOHN ARBUTHNOT

(1667-1735)

JOHN ARBUTHNOT was born in 1667 at Arbuthnot, in Kincardineshire. His father was a Scottish episcopal clergyman who lost his living after the Revolution. Arbuthnot was, accordingly, a Tory by birth and upbringing. From 1681 to 1685 he was at Marischal College, Aberdeen, but he went to

London at an early age, and earned his livelihood by teaching mathematics. He entered Oxford University as a fellow-commoner in 1694, accompanying a pupil thither, as was then a common enough custom. Two years later, when he was twenty-nine years of age, he decided to take up medicine, and

graduated M.D. at St. Andrews. He published various scientific works, including an *Essay on the Usefulness of Mathematical Learning*, and was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1704. In 1705 he graduated M.D. at Cambridge. In that year he had the good fortune to be at Epsom when Prince George of Denmark, Queen Anne's husband, was suddenly taken ill; he treated him successfully and was appointed physician extraordinary to the queen. Four years later he was appointed physician in ordinary, and in the following year was elected a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians. His rise to the top of his profession was, therefore, unusually rapid. He became intimate with Swift and Pope, and served his party by writing many political pamphlets so much in Swift's vein that they have been included in some editions of Swift's works. *The Art of Political Lying* (1712) is excellent; even better are the various pamphlets published in 1712 and collected, rearranged, and reissued as *The History of John Bull* in 1727. It is uncertain whether Arbuthnot himself invented the name "John Bull", but it is certain that he gave it its vogue. Arbuthnot was a prominent member of the Scriblerus Club, which consisted of Oxford, Atterbury, Pope, Congreve, Gay, Swift, and others, and there is little doubt that the *Memoirs of Martinus Scriblerus*, which were first printed in Pope's Works in 1741, are mainly if not altogether Arbuthnot's. "The design of the *Memoirs of Scriblerus* was to have ridiculed all the false tastes in learning, under the character of a man of capacity enough; that had

dipped into every art and science, but injudiciously in each." As Arbuthnot was easily the most accomplished scientist in the club, his part in its proceedings was probably that of leader. The *Memoirs* are admirably written, and were made use of by Sterne when writing *Tristram Shandy*. *Gulliver's Travels* was also inspired by the Scriblerus Club. The death of Queen Anne ended the club's activities, and caused Arbuthnot to lose his court appointment. For a time he retired to France, but soon returned to London and practised his profession. He helped Gay and Pope to write the feeble farce *Three Hours after Marriage* in 1717; a very different production, *Tables of Grecian, Roman and Jewish Measures, Weights, and Coins, reduced to the English Standard* (1707, revised 1727), was a received authority on its subject for many years. In the last years of his life he wrote three medical treatises. His health began to fail about 1723, and the death of his son in 1731 shook even his habitual cheerfulness. In a pathetic letter to Pope, written in 1734, he wrote: "A recovery in my case and at my age is impossible; the kindest wish of my friends is Euthanasia. Living or dying I shall always be yours." He died on 27th February, 1735.

Arbuthnot was the most amiable and the best-loved member of the circle of Swift and Pope. Swift wrote to Pope that "If the world had but a dozen Arbuthnots I would burn my *Travels*". Pope addressed to him the best and most famous of his satires. That he was able to retain without break the friendship of two such difficult men as Swift and Pope is in itself no

small testimony to the amiability of his character. Hardly any great writer has a more complicated bibliography. He cared little for fame as a writer, collaborated and claimed no share in the joint work, threw out hints which his friends elaborated, and allowed his children to make kites out of his writings. It is small wonder that his writings do not sustain his fame. *The History of John Bull* requires for its enjoyment too detailed a knowledge of the state of affairs in 1712; *The Memoirs of Martinus Scriblerus* is somewhat beyond the com-

prehension of the plain man in its satire on learning. But at his best Arbuthnot is very good; he is a good-natured Swift, a Swift without the *sæva indignatio*, if such a person is not, like "a prose Shakespeare", impossible to imagine. Swift, who was not given to eulogy, said of him: "He has more wit than we all have, and his humanity is equal to his wit." He is one of the most attractive as well as one of the most representative men of his age.

[George A. Aitken, *The Life and Works of John Arbuthnot*.]

From "The History of John Bull"

(SECOND PART)

CHAPTER I.—THE CHARACTER OF JOHN BULL'S MOTHER

John had a mother, whom he honoured extremely, a discreet, grave, sober, good conditioned, cleanly old gentlewoman, as ever lived; she was none of your cross-grained, termagant, scolding jades, that one had as good be hanged as live in the house with; such as are always censuring the conduct, and telling scandalous stories of their neighbours, extolling their own good qualities, and undervaluing those of others. On the contrary, she was of a meek spirit; and as she was strictly virtuous herself, so she always put the best construction upon the words and actions of her neighbours, except where they were irreconcilable to the rules of honesty and decency. She was neither one of your precise prudes, nor one of your fanatical old belles, that dress themselves like girls of fifteen, as she neither wore ruff, forehead-cloth, nor high-crowned hat, so she had laid aside feathers, flowers, and crimplt ribbons in her head dress, furbelo-scarfs, and hoop'd petticoats. She scorned to patch and paint, yet she loved to keep her hands and face clean. Tho' she wore no flaunting laced ruffles, she would not keep herself in a constant sweat with greasy flannel: tho' her hair was not stuck with jewels, she was not ashamed of a diamond cross; she was not like some ladies, hung about with toys and trinkets, tweezer-cases, pocket-glasses, and essence bottles; she used only a gold watch and an almanac, to mark the hours and the holy-days.

Her furniture was neat and genteel, well fancied, with a *bon goût*. As she affected not the grandeur of a state with a canopy, she thought there was no offence in an elbow-chair, she had laid aside your carving, gilding and japan work, as being too apt to gather dirt; but she never could be prevailed upon to part with plain wainscot and clean hangings. There are some ladies that affect to smell a stink in everything; they are always highly perfumed, and continually burning frankincense in their rooms; she was above such affectation, yet she never would lay aside the use of brooms and scrubbing-brushes, and scrupled not to lay her linen in fresh lavender.

She was no less genteel in her behaviour, well-bred, without affectation, in the due mean between one of your affected curtsying pieces of formality, and your romps that have no regard to the common rules of civility. There are some ladies that affect a mighty regard for their relations; "We must not eat to-day, for my uncle 'Tom, or my cousin Betty, died this time ten years. Let us have a ball to-night, it is my neighbour such a one's birthday." She looked upon all this as grimace; yet she constantly observed her husband's birthday, her wedding-day, and some few more.

Tho' she was a truly good woman, and had a sincere motherly love for her son John, yet there wanted not those who endeavoured to create a misunderstanding between them; and they had so far prevailed with him once, that he turned her out of doors, to his great sorrow; as he found afterwards, for his affairs went all at sixes and sevens.

She was no less judicious in the turn of her conversation and choice of her studies, in which she far exceeded all her sex; your rakes that hate the company of all sober, grave gentlewomen, would bear hers; and she would, by her handsome manner of proceeding, sooner reclaim, than some that were more sour and reserved; she was a zealous preacher up of chastity, and conjugal fidelity in wives, and by no means a friend to the new-fangled doctrine of the indispensable duty of cuckoldom: tho' she advanced her opinions with a becoming assurance, yet she never ushered them in, as some positive creatures will do, with domestical assertions, "This is infallible; I cannot be mistaken; none but a rogue can deny it". It has been observed that such people are oftener in the wrong than any body.

Tho' she had a thousand good qualities, she was not without her faults; amongst which one might, perhaps, reckon too great lenity to her servants, to whom she always gave good counsel, but often too gentle correction. I thought I could not say less of John Bull's mother, because she bears a part in the following transactions.

CHAPTER II.—THE CHARACTER OF JOHN BULL'S SISTER PEG, WITH THE QUARRELS THAT HAPPENED BETWEEN MASTER AND MISS IN THEIR CHILDHOOD

John had a sister, a poor girl that had been starved at nurse; any body would have guessed Miss to have been bred up under the influence of a cruel step-dame, and John to be the fondling of a tender mother. John looked ruddy and plump, with a pair of cheeks like a trumpeter; Miss looked pale and wan, as if she had the green sickness; and no wonder; for John was the darling; he had all the good bits, was crammed with good pullet, chicken, pig, goose, and capon; while Miss had only a little oatmeal and water, or a dry crust without butter. John had his golden pippins, peaches, and nectarines; poor Miss a crab apple, sloe, or a blackberry. Master lay in the best apartment, with his bed-chamber towards the South sun; Miss lodged in a garret, exposed to the North-wind, which shrivelled her countenance; however, this usage, though it stunted the girl in her growth, gave her a hardy constitution; she had life and spirit in abundance, and knew when she was ill used; now and then she would seize upon John's commons, snatch a leg of a pullet, or a bit of good beef, for which they were sure to go to fisticuffs. Master was indeed too strong for her; but Miss would not yield in the least point; but even when Master had got her down, she would scratch and bite like a tiger; when he gave her a cuff on the ear, she would prick him with her knitting needle: John brought a chain one day to tie her to the bedpost, for which affront Miss aimed a pen knife at his heart. In short, these quarrels grew up to rooted aversions; they gave one another nick-names, she called him Gundy-guts, and he called her Lousy Peg; though the girl was a tight clever wench as any was, and through her pale looks you might discern spirit and vivacity; which made her not, indeed, a perfect beauty, but something that was agreeable. It was barbarous in parents not to take notice of these early quarrels, and make them live better together, such domestic feuds proving afterwards the occasion of misfortunes to them both. Peg had, indeed, some odd humours and comical antipathy, for which John would jeer her. "What think you of my sister Peg (says he) that faints at the sound of an organ, and yet will dance and frisk at the noise of a bag-pipe?" "What is that to you, Gundy-guts? (quoth Peg) every body is to choose their own music." Then Peg had taken a fancy not to say her Paternoster, which made people imagine strange things of her. Of the three brothers that have made such a clutter in the world, Lord Peter, Martin and Jack; Jack had of late been her inclinations; Lord Peter she detested; nor did Martin stand much better in her good graces; but Jack had found the way to her heart. I have often admired what charms she discovered in that awkward booby, 'till I talked with a person that was acquainted with the intrigue, who gave me the following account of it.

CHAPTER III.—JACK'S CHARMS, OR THE METHOD BY WHICH HE GAINED PEG'S HEART

In the first place, Jack was a very young fellow, by much the youngest of the three brothers, and people, indeed, wondered how such a young upstart jackanapes should grow so pert and saucy, and take so much upon him.

Jack bragged of greater abilities than other men: he was well-gifted, as he pretended. I need not tell you what secret influence that has upon the Ladies. . . .

Jack was a prodigious ogler; he would ogle you the outside of his eye inward, and the white upward.

Jack gave himself out for a man of a great estate in the fortunate islands; of which the sole property was vested in his person; by this trick he cheated abundance of poor people of small sums, pretending to make over plantations in the said islands: but when the poor wretches came there with Jack's grant, they were beat, mocked, and turned out of doors.

I told you that Peg was whimsical, and loved any thing that was particular; in that way, Jack was her man; for he neither thought, spoke, dressed, nor acted like other mortals: he was for your bold strokes: he railed at fops, tho' he was himself the most affected in the world: instead of the common fashion, he would visit his mistress in a mourning cloak, band, short cuffs, and a peaked beard. He invented a way of coming into a room backwards, which, he said, showed more humility, and less affectation. Where other people stood, he sat: where they sat, he stood. When he went to court, he used to kick away the state, and sit down by his prince, cheek by jole: confound these states (says he) they are a modern invention. When he spoke to his prince, he always turned his br—ch upon him. If he was advised to fast for his health, he would eat roast-beef, if he was allowed a more plentiful diet, then he would be sure that day, to live upon water-gruel: He would cry at a wedding, laugh and make jests at a funeral.

He was no less singular in his opinions; you would have burst your sides to hear him talk of politics: "All government (says he) is founded upon the right distribution of punishments: decent executions keep the world in awe: for that reason, the majority of mankind ought to be hanged every year. For example, I suppose, the magistrate ought to pass an irreversible sentence upon all blue-ey'd children from the cradle; but that there may be some show of justice in this proceeding, these children ought to be trained up by masters, appointed for that purpose, to all sorts of villainy; that they may deserve their fate, and the execution of them may serve as an object of terror to the rest of mankind." As to the giving of pardons, he had this singular method. That when these wretches had the rope about their necks, it should be inquired, who believed they should be hanged, and who not? The first were to be pardoned, the last hanged

out-right. Such as were once pardoned, were never to be hanged afterwards, for any crime whatsoever. He had such skill in physiognomy, that he would pronounce peremptorily upon a man's face, That fellow (says he) do what he will, can't avoid hanging, he has a hanging look. By the same art, he would prognosticate a principality to a scoundrel.

He was no less particular in the choice of his studies. They were generally bent towards exploded chimeras, the perpetuum mobile, the circular shot, philosopher's stone, silent gun-powder, making chains for fleas, nets for flies, and instruments to unravel cobwebs and split hairs.

Thus, I think, I have given a distinct account of the methods he practised upon Peg. Her brother would now and then ask her, "What a devil dost thou see in that pragmatistical coxcomb, to make thee so in love with him? He is a fit match for a tailor or a shoemaker's daughter, but not for you that are a gentlewoman." "Fancy is free (quoth Peg) I'll take my own way; do you take yours. I do not care for your flaunting beaus, that gang with their breasts open, and their sarks over their waist-coats, that accost me with set speeches out of Sidney's *Arcadia*, or the *Academy of Compliments*. Jack is a sober, grave young man: tho' he has none of your studied harangues, his meaning is sincere: he has a great regard to his father's will; and he that shows himself a good son will make a good husband; besides I know he has the original deed of conveyance to the fortunate islands; the others are counterfeits." There is nothing so obstinate as a young lady in her amours: the more you cross her, the worse she is.

JONATHAN SWIFT

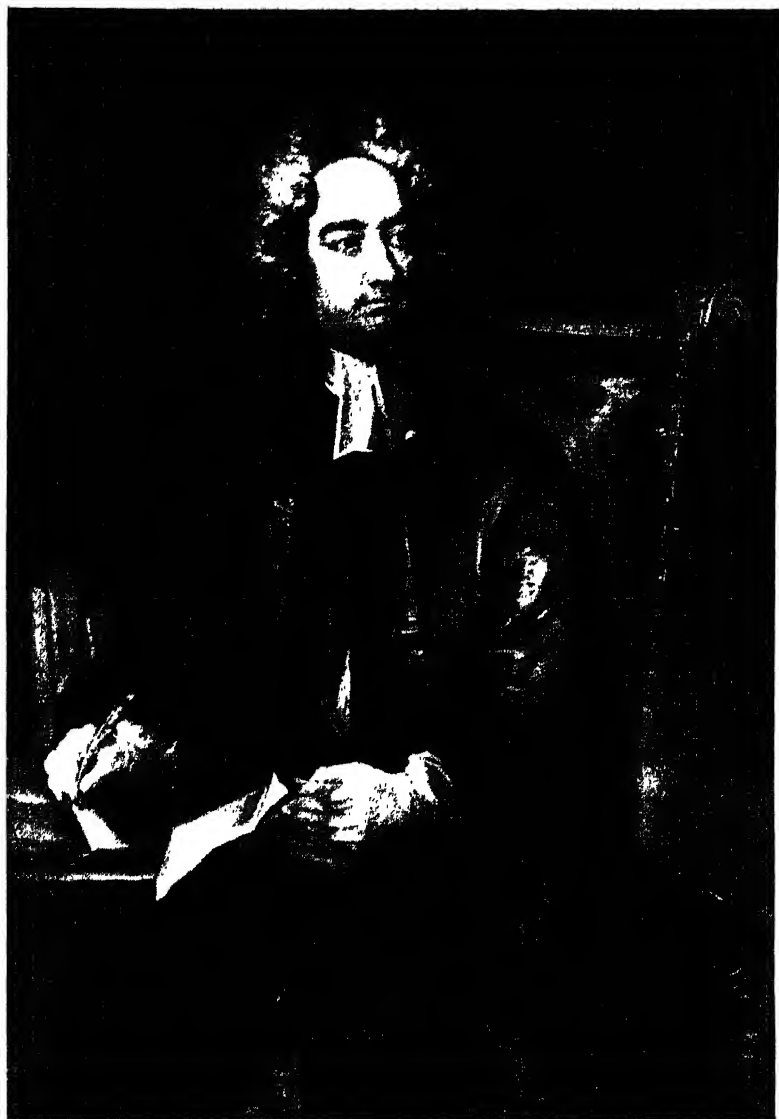
(1667 - 1745)

JONATHAN SWIFT was born in Dublin on St. Andrew's Day, 1667. He came of a Yorkshire family, several members of which had settled in Ireland. He was related to Dryden through his paternal grandmother, and to Herrick through his mother. He was a posthumous child, and was educated at the expense of his uncle, Godwin Swift, who sent him at the age of six to Kilkenny School, then the best school in Ireland, where he met Congreve. At the age of fourteen he was entered at

Trinity College, Dublin; he graduated B.A., not without difficulty, four years later. In 1688 Godwin Swift died, and Swift became amanuensis to Sir William Temple (q.v.), who was living in retirement at Moor Park, near Farnham. This position brought him early into touch with prominent politicians, and even with the king himself, who somewhat characteristically offered him a commission in the cavalry; but it seemed to be a blind-alley occupation. In 1694

Swift left his patron, being dissatisfied with his prospects, went to Ireland, was ordained deacon and priest, and on Temple's recommendation was presented to the prebend of Kilroot, near Carrickfergus, County Antrim. There Swift found himself in an uncongenial Scottish Presbyterian atmosphere. While at Kilroot he wrote the first draft of *A Tale of a Tub*, and carried on a love-affair with a Miss Jane Waring ("Varina") of Belfast; four years later he ended their correspondence with a harsh letter. He returned to Moor Park in 1696, and found himself more appreciated for his absence. He remained there until Temple died (1699). During his stay at Moor Park he spent much of his time with Esther Johnson ("Stella"), a daughter of the companion of Lady Giffard, Temple's widowed sister. When he met her first she was a child of seven, being fourteen years younger than Swift. Swift proceeded to Ireland with Lord Berkeley, who, after disappointing Swift twice, presented him to the living of Laracor, near Trim, together with two other small livings, and the prebend of Dunlavin, in St. Patrick's. Stella and her friend Rebecca Dingley soon migrated to Ireland, where Swift saw the former frequently, but always in the presence of a third person. In 1701 he graduated D.D. at Dublin, and in 1704 he published anonymously *A Tale of a Tub*; to it was appended *The Battle of the Books*. In 1708 appeared, among other things, an attack upon astrology under the title of *Predictions for the Year 1708*, by Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq., and in 1709, *A Project for the Advance-*

ment of Religion, dedicated to Lady Berkeley, the only work to which he ever put his name. In 1710 he was in London, being engaged by the Irish prelaty to obtain a remission of the first-fruits and twentieths, payable by the Irish clergy to the Crown, and was introduced to Harley, afterwards Earl of Oxford, and to St. John, subsequently Lord Bolingbroke. Swift then openly joined the Tory party. He has been much blamed, especially by Whig writers, for his desertion of the Whigs, but to blame him is unfair. Though a Whig in matters of state, a supporter of the Revolution, and afterwards a loyal though not an enthusiastic subject of King George, he was always a Tory in Church matters; and in his eyes temporal considerations were always outweighed by spiritual. He took over *The Examiner*, and wrote the numbers from 2nd November, 1710, to 14th June, 1711, making it a most powerful political weapon. He wrote many political tracts, of which two of the most important were *The Conduct of the Allies* (1711) and *The Barrier Treaty* (1712), which were invaluable to the Tory party, preparing the mind of the country for the peace which the ministers were then anxious to bring about. For his party services Swift desired an English bishopric; but the ridicule of the doctrine of transubstantiation in *A Tale of a Tub* was a fatal obstacle, and the only preferment he obtained from his ministerial friends was the Irish deanery of St. Patrick's, to which he was presented in 1713. The quarrels between Oxford and Bolingbroke, whom he vainly attempted to reconcile, and the death



JONATHAN SWIFT, D.D.

From the painting by C. Jervas in the National Portrait Gallery

of the queen, which soon followed, put an end to his prospects, and condemned him to unwilling residence for life in a country which he disliked, and which was as much a place of exile for him as Tomi was for Ovid. According to some of his biographers, Swift was privately married to Stella in 1716; others strongly deny this allegation. If a marriage took place, it was a marriage only in name; whether there was or was not a formal ceremony scarcely explains Swift's conduct, which is in either case inexplicable. In 1709 or thereabouts he had become acquainted in London with Hester Vanhomrigh ("Vanessa"), then a bright girl of nineteen, interested in literature and politics. He guided her reading for some time, and she fell violently in love with him. She made no disguise of her feelings, and followed him to Ireland; he gave her no encouragement, and endeavoured to arrange a suitable marriage for her, but it was of no avail. The story of Swift, Stella, and Vanessa is probably less dramatic than many of the extant versions of it. It is clear that Swift merely esteemed Vanessa, though he liked her company and was flattered by her passion for him; for Stella he had all the affection which he was capable of feeling. The end of a painful situation came in 1723, when Vanessa wrote a letter to Stella asking her if she was Swift's wife. Stella gave the letter to Swift, who rode off and flung it down upon Vanessa's table without speaking. Vanessa died within a few weeks. Meanwhile Swift, though always regarding himself as an Englishman, flung himself heart and soul into Irish affairs. Ireland was

at that time in an inexpressibly wretched condition, owing to the short-sighted policy of the English Government in virtually suppressing, from motives of sheer jealousy, the raising of cattle and the woollen industry. Swift became the idol of the Irish people by the publication of his *Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufactures* (1720), and of *The Letters of M.B., Drapier* (i.e. Draper) in 1724. *The Drapier's Letters*, as they are usually called, dealt with a plan for coining copper in Ireland, a patent for doing so having been granted to William Wood, a Birmingham tradesman. The real objection to the scheme was not that it was a bad one, for copper coins were needed, nor that it was given to Wood by jobbery, for jobbery played a part in most transactions in those days; the scheme was detested by the Irish mainly because they had had no say in it, and it was an outstanding example of government without the consent of the governed. The scheme was withdrawn, Wood was compensated with £24,000, and Swift awoke in Ireland, for better and for worse, the dormant spirit of nationality. Stella died in 1728, and after her death Swift lived a more retired life, and became more and more misanthropic and morbid. He did not, however, relax his efforts to better the miserable condition of the Irish, and dedicated a third of his income to charity. His influence in Ireland was paramount; when it was at its height, he got his servant to announce to some noisy star-gazers that the eclipse had been postponed by order of the Dean of St. Patrick's. The crowd, thinking him almost omnipotent, dispersed at once. His

own mental eclipse he could not postpone. For years he had suffered from fits of giddiness, which he, probably incorrectly, attributed to his having eaten too many golden pippins during his early days at Moor Park; and from headaches, which he aggravated by his obstinate refusal to wear spectacles. The disease from which he suffered was probably a form of labyrinthine vertigo. He became quite insane in 1742, and was with difficulty restrained from tearing out his eye. He grew at length quite tranquil, but sank into a state of idiocy which lasted for three years before it was ended by death. He bequeathed the bulk of his fortune to found a hospital for lunatics.

The life and character of Swift are perhaps more interesting than those of any other English man of letters. Great as are many of his writings, all of which bear the stamp of his unique personality, we feel that they are not so great as the man himself. His character is an absorbing psychological study; nor can anyone who does not know something of Swift understand to the full the depths of human misery. Compared with Swift, Juvenal is an optimist and the Preacher a man of sanguine outlook. It is possible to mention here only Swift's principal works and a few of his innumerable pamphlets. He was a titanic pamphleteer; but although all his writings show ability of the highest kind, many are lacking in interest save to students of the minutiae of early eighteenth-century history and politics. Such writings were never intended to be other than ephemeral; Swift was, in fact, the earliest and greatest of journalists,

the prince of leader-writers. That many of these pamphlets are still read is due entirely to Swift's unique gifts of style and irony. *A Tale of a Tub* is one of the best and most characteristic of Swift's writings. It is a brilliant satire on Roman Catholics and Calvinists; nor does it entirely spare Swift's own Church, whose motto has ever been "medio tutissimus ibis". Many other subjects are satirized besides the Churches; critics and bad writers come in for their share of sarcasm. *The Battle of the Books*, a by-product of the Bentley-Boyle controversy, is a slighter piece, but its considerable merits are not lessened by the fact that Swift was on the wrong side. Not every critic has noticed that Swift expressly says that "the manuscript, by the injury of fortune or weather, being in several places imperfect, we cannot learn to which side the victory fell". *Gulliver's Travels* (1726) is by far the most famous of all Swift's works, and is one of the greatest books in the English language. Its charm lies to a large extent in its air of artless authenticity, which was increased in the early editions by a portrait of Captain Gulliver, four maps, and two diagrams. Its satire becomes more scathing and more universal towards the end, the last book being the most powerful indictment of humanity ever penned. *Gulliver's Travels* is one of the most original of books. Its debt to Lucian and Rabelais is of the slightest. Dr. Johnson's criticism upon it that "when once you have thought of big men and little men, it is very easy to do all the rest" is one of the worst utterances of that great critic, who was ever more at home



*Gulliver, in his ship, and his shipmates, are seen
in the distance, as they are, in the distance, in the distance.*

TRAVELS IN SEVERAL Remote NATIONS OF THE WORLD.

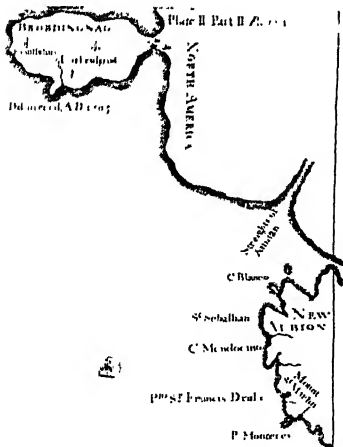
IN FOUR PARTS.

By **LEMUEL GULLIVER,**
Esq; Surgeon, and then a Cap-
tain of the SHIPS.

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TRAVELS.

PART II.

A Voyage to BROBDINGNAG.

CHAP. I.

*A great Storm described, the Long-Boat
sent to fetch Water, the Author goes
with it to discover the Country. He is
left on Shore, is seized by one of the
Natives, and carried to a Farmer's
House. His Reception there, with se-
veral Accidents that happened there. A
Description of the Inhabitants.*

HAVING been condemned by
Nature and Fortune to an active
and restless Life, in ten Months
after my Return, I again left
my native Country, and took Shipping
PART II. B in

PORTRAIT, MAP, ETC., FROM THE FIRST EDITION (second issue)
OF GULLIVER'S TRAVELS

with talent than with genius. *Gulliver's Travels* has the power of attracting readers of all kinds. Children love it as the liveliest and most realistic of fairy-tales; men appreciate its keen and all-embracing satire; for historians it throws much light on the reign of George I; men of letters appreciate its consummate art and its cunning use of the plain style. *A Complete Collection of Genteel and Ingenious Conversation* (published 1738, but written earlier) is a delightful and, for Swift, good-natured satire upon the banalities and *clichés* of polite conversation. It is written dialogue-wise; five men and three ladies take part in this contest in trite repartees. It was so popular that it was acted in a Dublin theatre. *Directions to Servants*, which was never finished, was published in 1745. It is a good piece of irony, and shows how keen an eye Swift had for details, especially when disagreeable. *An Argument against abolishing Christianity* is a brilliantly ironical pamphlet; *A Letter to a Young Gentleman, lately entered into Holy Orders* throws considerable light on Swift's religious opinions. *The Drapier's Letters*, already mentioned, is a collection of powerful pieces of special pleading. The pamphlet usually called, for sake of convenience, *A Modest Proposal*, though too cannibalistic for some readers' tastes, is perhaps the most ironical of all ironical writings. Swift's poems have merit, but not poetic merit. *Cadenus and Vanessa* (Cadenus is an anagram of *decanus*, the dean) and some of the poems addressed to Stella are of great autobiographical interest. *On Poetry: a Rhapsody* is a very powerful

piece; and *On the Death of Dr. Swift* is a witty and at the same time pathetic poem. Some of his poems which pretend to be written by members of the lower classes are unequalled in their kind. Of his other works the *Journal to Stella* is the most important. It consists of letters written twice daily to Stella between September, 1710, and June, 1713. It was not published until 1766. There is no doubt that the *Journal* was intended for no eyes save Stella's and those of Mrs. Dingley, the nonpareil of gooseberries; it is so intimate with its "little language" and its confidences that it seems almost dishonourable to read it and enjoy it. The only book with which it can be compared is Pepys's *Diary*, but while Pepys reveals himself entirely, unashamed as Adam before the Fall, Swift shows us his two soul-sides, "one to face the world with, One to show a woman when he loves her". The gloomy and formidable misanthrope could be strangely tender to Stella and to his friends. There are three striking characteristics of Swift's writings. He was highly original, owing less than almost any great writer to his predecessors. He was indifferent to fame, publishing only one of the least of his works in his own name. His wisdom, which was great, was always practical; although so ardent a churchman, he was always one of the children of this world. As regards style, his writing is well-nigh perfect. It is clear, precise, and exact, and absolutely free from rhetorical devices. As he intended, it can be understood by all who can read print. Swift has been blamed for being too much a misanthrope;

but it would be just as fair to blame him for becoming insane. Thackeray very justly said of him: "An immense genius; an awful downfall and ruin! So great a man he seems to me, that thinking of him is like thinking of an empire falling." His story is a tragedy, and to some extent effects "the purgation of pity and fear". Only to some extent, however, as Aristotle goes on to say that fear is aroused by the misfortune of a man like ourselves, and Swift is a Cyclops, unlike anyone else, who dwelt apart and brooded upon things

forbidden (ἀπάνευθεν ἐὼν ἀθεμίτωτα ἤδη).

[Sir Leslie Stephen, *Jonathan Swift* (English Men of Letters Series); J. Churton Collins, *Jonathan Swift: a Biographical and Critical Study*; Sir Walter Scott, *Memoirs of Jonathan Swift*; Sir Henry Craik, *Life of Jonathan Swift*; G. Moriarty, *Dean Swift and his Writings*; W. M. Thackeray, *English Humorists of the Eighteenth Century*; J. Forster, *Life of Jonathan Swift* (incomplete—down to 1711 only); Shane Leslie, *The Skull of Swift*; Carl Van Doren, *Swift*.]

From "A Tale of a Tub"

It will be no difficult part to persuade the reader, that so many worthy discoveries met with great success in the world; though I may justly assure him, that I have related much the smallest number; my design having been only to single out such as will be of most benefit for public imitation, or which best served to give some idea of the reach and wit of the inventor. And therefore it need not be wondered at, if, by this time, Lord Peter was become exceeding rich. But, alas! he had kept his brain so long and so violently upon the rack, that at last it shook itself, and began to turn round for a little ease. In short, what with pride, projects, and knavery, poor Peter was grown distracted, and conceived the strangest imaginations in the world. In the height of his fits (as it is usual with those who run mad out of pride,) he would call himself God Almighty, and sometimes monarch of the universe. I have seen him (says my author) take three old high-crowned hats, and clap them all on his head three story high, with a huge bunch of keys at his girdle, and an angling-rod in his hand. In which guise, whoever went to take him by the hand in the way of salutation, Peter with much grace, like a well-educated spaniel, would present them with his foot; and if they refused his civility, then he would raise it as high as their chaps, and give them a damned kick on the mouth, which hath ever since been called a salute. Whoever walked by without paying him their compliments, having a wonderful strong breath, he would blow their hats off into the dirt. Meantime his affairs at home went upside down, and his two brothers had a wretched time; where his first *boutade* was, to kick both their wives one morning out of doors, and his own too; and in their stead, gave orders

to pick up the first three strollers that could be met with in the streets. A while after he nailed up the cellar-door; and would not allow his brothers a drop of drink to their victuals. Dining one day at an alderman's in the city, Peter observed him expatiating, after the manner of his brethren, in the praises of his sirloin of beef. "Beef," said the sage magistrate, "is the king of meat; beef comprehends in it the quintessence of partridge, and quail, and venison, and pheasant, and plum-pudding, and custard." When Peter came home, he would needs take the fancy of cooking up this doctrine into use, and apply the precept, in default of a sirloin, to his brown loaf: "Bread," says he, "dear brothers, is the staff of life; in which bread is contained, inclusive, the quintessence of beef, mutton, veal, venison, partridge, plum-pudding, and custard; and, to render all complete, there is intermingled a due quantity of water, whose crudities are also corrected by yeast or barm; through which means it becomes a wholesome fermented liquor, diffused through the mass of the bread." Upon the strength of these conclusions, next day at dinner, was the brown loaf served up in all the formality of a city feast. "Come, brothers," said Peter, "fall to, and spare not; here is excellent good mutton; or hold, now my hand is in, I will help you." At which word, in much ceremony, with fork and knife, he carves out two good slices of a loaf, and presents each on a plate to his brothers. The elder of the two, not suddenly entering into Lord Peter's conceit, began with very civil language to examine the mystery. "My lord," said he, "I doubt, with great submission, there may be some mistake." "What," says Peter, "you are pleasant; come then, let us hear this jest your head is so big with." "None in the world, my lord; but, unless I am very much deceived, your lordship was pleased a while ago to let fall a word about mutton, and I would be glad to see it with all my heart." "How," said Peter, appearing in great surprise, "I do not comprehend this at all."—Upon which the younger interposing to set the business aright; "My lord," said he, "my brother, I suppose, is hungry, and longs for the mutton your lordship has promised us to dinner." "Pray," said Peter, "take me along with you; either you are both mad, or disposed to be merrier than I approve of. If you there do not like your piece, I will carve you another: though I should take that to be the choice bit of the whole shoulder." "What then, my lord," replied the first, "it seems this is a shoulder of mutton all this while?" "Pray, sir," says Peter, "eat your victuals, and leave off your impertinence, if you please, for I am not disposed to relish it at present." But the other could not forbear, being over-provoked at the affected seriousness of Peter's countenance. "By G—, my lord," said he, "I can only say that to my eyes, and fingers, and teeth, and nose, it seems to be nothing but a crust of bread." Upon which the second put in his word: "I never saw a piece of mutton in my life so nearly resembling a slice from a twelve-penny loaf." "Look ye, gentlemen,"

cries Peter in a rage, "to convince you what a couple of blind, positive, ignorant, wilful puppies you are, I will use but this plain argument; by G—, it is true, good, natural mutton as any in Leadenhall market; and G— confound you both eternally, if you offer to believe otherwise." Such a thundering proof as this left no farther room for objection. The two unbelievers began to gather and pocket up their mistake as hastily as they could. "Why, truly," said the first, "upon more mature consideration—" "Ay," says the other, interrupting him, "now I have thought better on the thing, your lordship seems to have a great deal of reason." "Very well," said Peter; "here, boy, fill me a beer-glass of claret; here's to you both, with all my heart." The two brethren, much delighted to see him so readily appeased, returned their most humble thanks, and said they would be glad to pledge his lordship. "That you shall," said Peter; "I am not a person to refuse you anything that is reasonable; wine, moderately taken, is a cordial; here is a glass a-piece for you; 'tis true natural juice from the grape, none of your damned vintner's brewings." Having spoke thus, he presented to each of them another large dry crust, bidding them to drink it off, and not be hashful, for it would do them no hurt. The two brothers, after having performed the usual office in such delicate conjunctures, of staring a sufficient period at Lord Peter and each other, and finding how matters were likely to go, resolved not to enter on a new dispute, but let him carry the point as he pleased; for he was now got into one of his mad fits, and to argue or expostulate farther, would only serve to render him a hundred times more untractable.

I have chosen to relate this worthy matter in all its circumstances, because it gave a principal occasion to that great and famous rupture, which happened about the same time among these brethren, and was never afterwards made up. But of that I shall treat at large in another section.

However, it is certain, that Lord Peter, even in his lucid intervals, was very lewdly given in his common conversation, extreme wilful and positive, and would at any time rather argue to the death, than allow himself once to be in an error. Besides, he had an abominable faculty of telling huge palpable lies, upon all occasions; and not only swearing to the truth, but cursing the whole company to hell if they pretended to make the least scruple of believing him. One time he swore he had a cow at home, which gave as much milk at a meal, as would fill three thousand churches; and what was yet more extraordinary, would never turn sour. Another time he was telling of an old sign-post, that belonged to his father, with nails and timber enough in it to build sixteen large men-of-war. Talking one day of Chinese waggons, which were made so light as to sail over mountains—"z—ds," said Peter, "where's the wonder of that? By G—, I saw a large house of lime and stone travel over sea and land,

(granting that it stopped sometimes to bait), above two thousand German leagues." And that which was the good of it, he would swear desperately all the while, that he never told a lie in his life; and at every word; "By G—, gentlemen, I tell you nothing but the truth: and the D—I broil them eternally, that will not believe me."

In short Peter grew so scandalous, that all the neighbourhood began in plain words to say he was no better than a knave. And his two brothers, long weary of his ill usage, resolved at last to leave him; but first, they humbly desired a copy of their father's will, which had now lain by neglected time out of mind. Instead of granting this request, he called them damned sons of whores, rogues, traitors, and the rest of the vile names he could muster up. However, while he was abroad one day upon his projects, the two youngsters watched their opportunity, made a shift to come at the will, and took a *copia vera*, by which they presently saw how grossly they had been abused; their father having left them equal heirs, and strictly commanded that whatever they got, should lie in common among them all. Pursuant to which, their next enterprise was, to break open the cellar-door, and get a little good drink, to spirit and comfort their hearts. In copying the will, they had met another precept against whoring, divorce, and separate maintenance; upon which their next work was to discard their concubines, and send for their wives. While all this was in agitation, there enters a solicitor from Newgate, desiring Lord Peter would please procure a pardon for a thief that was to be hanged to-morrow. But the two brothers told him, he was a coxcomb to seek pardons from a fellow who deserved to be hanged much better than his client; and discovered all the method of that imposture, in the same form I delivered it a while ago, advising the solicitor to put his friend upon obtaining a pardon from the king. In the midst of all this clutter and revolution, in comes Peter with a file of dragoons at his heels, and gathering from all hands what was in the wind, he and his gang, after several millions of scurrilities and curses, not very important here to repeat, by main force very fairly kicked them both out of doors, and would never let them come under his roof from that day to this.

(From *Section IV.*)

From "Gulliver's Travels"

And here it may perhaps divert the curious reader, to give some account of my domestic, and my manner of living in this country, during a residence of nine months and thirteen days. Having a head mechanically turned, and being likewise forced by necessity, I had made for myself a table and chair convenient enough, out of the largest trees in the royal park. Two hundred sempstresses were employed to make me shirts, and linen

for my bed and table, all of the strongest and coarsest kind they could get; which, however, they were forced to quilt together in several folds, for the thickest was some degrees finer than lawn. Their linen is usually three inches wide and three foot make a piece. The sempstresses took my measure as I lay on the ground, one standing at my neck, and another at my midleg, with a strong cord extended, that each held by the end, while the third measured the length of the cord with a rule of an inch long. Then they measured my right thumb, and desired no more; for by a mathematical computation, that twice round the thumb is once round the wrist, and so on to the neck and the waist, and by the help of my old shirt, which I displayed on the ground before them for a pattern, they fitted me exactly. Three hundred tailors were employed in the same manner to make me clothes; but they had another contrivance for taking my measure. I kneeled down, and they raised a ladder from the ground to my neck; upon this ladder one of them mounted, and let fall a plumb-line from my collar to the floor, which just answered the length of my coat: but my waist and arms I measured myself. When my clothes were finished, which was done in my house, (for the largest of theirs would not have been able to hold them) they looked like the patch-work made by the ladies in England, only that mine were all of a colour.

I had three hundred cooks to dress my victuals, in little convenient huts built about my house, where they and their families lived, and prepared me two dishes a-piece. I took up twenty waiters in my hand, and placed them on the table: an hundred more attended below on the ground, some with dishes of meat, and some with barrels of wine, and other liquors, slung on their shoulders; all which the waiters above drew up as I wanted, in a very ingenious manner, by certain cords, as we draw the bucket up a well in Europe. A dish of their meat was a good mouthful, and a barrel of their liquor a reasonable draught. Their mutton yields to ours, but their beef is excellent. I have had a sirloin so large, that I have been forced to make three bits of it; but this is rare. My servants were astonished to see me eat it bones and all, as in our country we do the leg of a lark. Their geese and turkeys I usually eat at a mouthful, and I must confess they far exceed ours. Of their smaller fowl I could take up twenty or thirty at the end of my knife.

One day his Imperial Majesty, being informed of my way of living, desired that himself and his Royal Consort, with the young Princes of the blood of both sexes, might have the happiness (as he was pleased to call it) of dining with me. They came accordingly, and I placed them in chairs of state on my table, just over against me, with their guards about them. Flimnap, the Lord High Treasurer, attended there likewise with his white staff; and I observed he often looked on me with a sour countenance, which I would not seem to regard, but eat more than usual, in honour to my dear country, as well as to fill the court with admiration.

I have some private reasons to believe, that this visit from his Majesty gave Flimnap an opportunity of doing me ill offices to his master. That minister had always been my secret enemy, though he outwardly caressed me more than was usual to the moroseness of his nature. He represented to the Emperor the low condition of his treasury; that he was forced to take up money at great discount; that exchequer bills would not circulate under nine per cent. below par; that in short I had cost his Majesty above a million and a half of *sprugs* (their greatest gold coin, about the bigness of a spangle); and upon the whole, that it would be advisable in the Emperor to take the first fair occasion of dismissing me.

I am here obliged to vindicate the reputation of an excellent lady, who was an innocent sufferer upon my account. The Treasurer took a fancy to be jealous of his wife, from the malice of some evil tongues, who informed him that her Grace had taken a violent affection for my person; and the court-scandal ran for some time, that she once came privately to my lodging. This I solemnly declare to be a most infamous falsehood, without any grounds, farther than that her Grace was pleased to treat me with all innocent marks of freedom and friendship. I own she came often to my house, but always publicly, nor ever without three more in the coach, who were usually her sister and young daughter, and some particular acquaintance; but this was common to many other ladies of the court. And I still appeal to my servants round, whether they at any time saw a coach at my door without knowing what persons were in it. On those occasions, when a servant had given me notice, my custom was to go immediately to the door; and, after paying my respects, to take up the coach and two horses very carefully in my hands, (for, if there were six horses, the postillion always unharnessed four) and place them on a table, where I had fixed a moveable rim quite round, of five inches high, to prevent accidents. And I have often had four coaches and horses at once on my table full of company, while I sat in my chair leaning my face towards them; and when I was engaged with one set, the coachmen would gently drive the others round my table. I have passed many an afternoon very agreeably in these conversations. But I defy the Treasurer, or his two informers (I will name them, and let them make their best of it) Clustril and Drunlo, to prove that any person ever came to me *incognito*, except the secretary Reldresal, who was sent by express command of his Imperial Majesty, as I have before related. I should not have dwelt so long upon this particular, if it had not been a point wherein the reputation of a great lady is so nearly concerned, to say nothing of my own; though I then had the honour to be a *Nardac*, which the Treasurer himself is not; for all the world knows he is only a *Glumglum*, a title inferior by one degree, as that of Marquis is to a Duke in England, although I allow he preceded me in right of his post. These false informations, which I afterwards came to the knowledge of,

by an accident not proper to mention, made Flimnap, the Treasurer, show his lady for some time an ill countenance, and me a worse; and although he were at last undeceived and reconciled to her, yet I lost all credit with him, and found my interest decline very fast with the Emperor himself, who was indeed too much governed by that favourite.

(From *A Voyage to Lilliput*, Chapter VI.)

A Modest Proposal

FOR PREVENTING THE CHILDREN OF POOR PEOPLE IN IRELAND FROM BEING
A BURTHEN TO THEIR PARENTS OR COUNTRY, AND FOR MAKING THEM
BENEFICIAL TO THE PUBLICK.

It is a melancholly Object to those, who walk through this great Town or travel in the Country, when they see the Streets, the Roads, and Cabbin-doors crowded with Beggars of the Female Sex, followed by three, four, or six children, all in Rags, and importuning every Passenger for an Alms. These Mothers instead of being able to work for their honest livelihood, are forced to employ all their time in Stroling to beg Sustenance for their helpless Infants, who, as they grow up, either turn Thieves for want of work, or leave their dear Native Country, to fight for the Pretender in Spain, or sell themselves to the Barbadoes.

I think it is agreed by all Parties, that this prodigious number of Children in the Arms, or on the Backs, or at the heels of their Mothers, and frequently of their Fathers, is in the present deplorable state of the Kingdom, a very great additional grievance; and therefore whoever could find out a fair, cheap and easy method of making these Children sound and useful Members of the common-wealth would deserve so well of the publick, as to have his Statue set up for a preserver of the Nation.

But my intention is very far from being confined to provide only for the Children of professed Beggars, it is of a much greater Extent, and shall take in the whole Number of Infants at a certain age, who are born of Parents in effect as little able to support them, as those who demand our Charity in the Streets.

As to my own part, having turned my Thoughts, for many Years, upon this important Subject, and maturely weighed the several Schemes of our Projectors, I have always found them grossly mistaken in their computation. It is true, a Child just dropt from its Dam, may be supported by her Milk, for a Solar Year with little other Nourishment, at most not above the Value of Two Shillings, which the Mother may certainly get, or the Value in Scraps, by her lawful Occupation of begging; and it is exactly at one Year Old that I propose to provide for them in

such a manner, as, instead of being a Charge upon their Parents, or the Parish, or wanting Food and Raiment for the rest of their Lives, they shall, on the Contrary, contribute to the Feeding and partly to the Cloathing of many Thousands.

There is likewise another great Advantage in my Scheme, that it will prevent those voluntary Abortions, and that horrid practice of Women murdering their Bastard Children, alas! too frequent among us, Sacrificing the poor innocent Babes, I doubt, more to avoid the Expense than the Shame, which would move Tears and Pity in the most Savage and inhuman breast.

The number of Souls in this Kingdom being usually reckoned one Million and a half, Of these I calculate there may be about two hundred thousand Couple whose Wives are Breeders; from which number I subtract thirty Thousand Couples, who are able to maintain their own children, although I apprehend there cannot be so many, under the present Distresses of the Kingdom; but this being granted, there will remain an hundred and seventy thousand Breeders. I again subtract fifty Thousand, for those Women who miscarry, or whose Children die by accident, or disease within the Year. There only remain an hundred and twenty thousand Children of poor Parents annually born; The question therefore is, How this number shall be reared, and provided for, which, as I have already said, under the present Situation of Affairs, is utterly impossible by all the Methods hitherto proposed; for we can neither employ them in Handicraft or Agriculture; we neither build Houses, (I mean in the Country) nor cultivate Land: They can very seldom pick up a Livelyhood by Stealing till they arrive at six years Old; except where they are of towardly parts, although, I confess they learn the Rudiments much earlier; during which time they can however be properly looked upon only as Probationers, as I have been informed by a principal Gentleman in the County of Cavan, who protested to me, that he never knew above one or two Instances under the Age of six, even in a part of the Kingdom so renowned for the quickest proficiency in that Art.

I am assured by our Merchants, that a Boy or a Girl before twelve years Old, is no saleable Commodity, and even when they come to this Age, they will not yield above three Pounds, or three Pounds and half a crown at most on the Exchange, which cannot turn to Account either to the Parents or Kingdom, the Charge of Nutriment and Rags having been at least four times that Value.

I shall now therefore humbly propose my own Thoughts, which I hope will not be lyable to the least Objection.

I have been assured by a very knowing American of my acquaintance in London, that a young healthy Child well Nursed is at a year Old a most delicious nourishing and wholesome Food, whether Stewed, Roasted,

Baked, or Boiled, and I make no doubt that it will equally serve in a Fricasie, or a Ragoust.

I do therefore humbly offer it to publick consideration, that of the Hundred and twenty thousand Children, already computed, twenty thousand may be reserved for Breed, whereof only one fourth part to be Males; which is more than we allow to Sheep, black Cattle, or Swine, and my Reason is, that these Children are seldom the Fruits of Marriage, a Circumstance not much regarded by our Savages, therefore, one Male will be sufficient to serve four Femalès. That the remaining Hundred thousand may at a year Old be offered in Sale to the Persons of Quality and Fortune through the Kingdom, always advising the Mother to let them Suck plentifully in the last Month, so as to render them Plump, and Fat for a good Table. A Child will make two Dishes at an Entertainment for Friends, and when the Family dines alone, the fore or hind quarter will make a reasonable Dish, and seasoned with a little Pepper or Salt will be very good Boiled on the fourth Day, especially in Winter.

I have reckoned upon a Medium, that a Child just born will weigh 12 pounds, and in a solar Year if tolerably nursed, encreaseth to 28 Pounds.

I grant this food will be somewhat dear, and therefore very proper for Landlords, who, as they have already devoured most of the Parents, seem to have the best Title to the Children.

Infants' flesh will be in Season throughout the Year, but more plentiful in March, and a little before and after, for we are told by a grave Author an eminent French Physician, that Fish being a Prolifick Dyet, there are more Children born in Roman Catholick Countries about nine months after Lent, than at any other Season, therefore reckoning a Year after Lent, the Markets will be more glutted than usual, because the Number of Popish Infants, is at least three to one in this Kingdom, and therefore it will have one other Collateral advantage, by lessening the Number of Papists among us.

I have already computed the Charge of nursing a Begger's Child (in which list I reckon all Cottagers, Labourers, and four fifths of the Farmers) to be about two Shillings per Annum, Rags included, and I believe no Gentleman would repine to give Ten Shillings for the Carcass of a good fat Child, which, as I have said will make four Dishes of excellent Nutritive Meat, when he hath only some particular Friend, or his own Family to Dine with him. Thus the Squire will learn to be a good Landlord, and grow popular among his Tenants, the Mother will have Eight Shillings net profit, and be fit for work till she produces another Child.

Those who are more thrifty (as I must confess the Times require) may flea the Carcass; the Skin of which, Artificially dressed, will make admirable Gloves for Ladies, and Summer Boots for fine Gentlemen.

As to our City of Dublin, Shambles may be appointed for this purpose in the most convenient parts of it, and Butchers we may be assured will not be wanting, although I rather recommend buying the Children alive, and dressing them hot from the Knife, as we do roasting Pigs.

A very worthy Person, a true Lover of his Country, and whose Virtues I highly esteem, was lately pleased, in discoursing on this matter, to offer a refinement upon my Scheme. He said, that many Gentlemen of this Kingdom, having of late destroyed their Deer, he conceived that the want of Venison might be well supplied by the Bodies of young Lads and Maidens, not exceeding fourteen Years of Age, nor under twelve, so great a Number of both Sexes in every Country being now ready to Starve, for want of Work and Service; And these to be disposed of by their Parents if alive, or otherwise by their nearest Relations. But with due deference to so excellent a friend, and so deserving a Patriot, I cannot be altogether in his Sentiments, for as to the Males, my American acquaintance assured me from frequent Experience, that their flesh was generally Tough and Lean, like that of our Schoolboys, by continual exercise, and their Taste disagreeable, and to Fatten them would not answer the Charge. Then as to the Females, it would, I think with humble Submission, be a loss to the Publick, because they soon would become Breeders themselves: And besides it is not improbable that some scrupulous People might be apt to Censure such a Practice, (although indeed very unjustly) as a little bordering upon Cruelty, which, I confess, hath always been with me the strongest objection against any Project, how well so ever intended.

But in order to justify my friend, he confessed, that this expedient was put into his Head by the famous Sallmanaazor, a Native of the Island Formosa, who came from thence to London, above twenty Years ago, and in Conversation told my Friend, that in his Country when any young Person happened to be put to Death, the Executioner sold the Carcass to Persons of Quality, as a prime Dainty, and that, in his Time, the Body of a plump Girl of fifteen, who was crucifyed for an attempt to Poison the Emperor, was sold to his Imperial Majesty's Prime Minister of State, and other great Mandarins of the Court, in Joints from the Gibbet, at four hundred Crowns. Neither indeed can I deny, that if the same use were made of several plump young Girls in this Town, who, without one single Groat to their Fortunes, cannot stir abroad without a Chair, and appear at a Play-House, and Assemblies in Foreign fineries, which they will never pay for; the Kingdom would not be the worse.

Some Persons of a desponding Spirit are in great concern about that vast Number of poor People, who are Aged, Diseased, or Maimed, and I have been desired to imploy my Thoughts what Course may be taken, to ease the Nation of so grievous an Incumbrance. But I am not in the least pain upon that matter, because it is very well known, that

they are every Day dying, and rotting, by cold and famine, and filth, and vermin, as fast as can be reasonably expected. And as to the young Labourers, they are now in almost as hopeful a Condition. They cannot get Work, and consequently pine away for want of Nourishment, to a degree, that if at any Time they are accidentally hired to common Labour, they have not strength to perform it, and thus the Country and themselves are happily delivered from the Evils to come.

I have too long digressed, and therefore shall return to my Subject. I think the Advantages by the Proposal which I have made are obvious and many, as well as of the highest Importance.

For First, as I have already observed, it would greatly lessen the Number of Papists, with whom we are Yearly over-run, being the principal Breeders of the Nation, as well as our most dangerous Enemies, and who stay at home on purpose with a Design to deliver the Kingdom to the Pretender, hoping to take their Advantage by the Absence of so many good Protestants, who have chosen rather to leave their Country, than stay at home, and pay Tithes against their Conscience, to an Episcopal Curate.

Secondly, the poorer Tenants will have something valuable of their own which by Law may be made lyable to Distress, and help to pay their Landlord's Rent, their Corn and Cattle being already seized, and Money a Thing Unknown.

Thirdly, whereas the Maintenance of an hundred thousand Children, from two Years old, and upwards, cannot be computed at less than Ten Shillings a piece per Annum, the Nation's Stock will be thereby encreased fifty thousand Pounds per Annum, besides the Profit of a new Dish, introduced to the Tables of all Gentlemen of Fortune in the Kingdom, who have any Refinement in Taste, and the Money will circulate among our Selves, the Goods being entirely of our own Growth and Manufacture.

Fourthly, The constant Breeders, beside the gain of eight Shillings Ster. per Annum, by the Sale of their Children, will be rid of the Charge of maintaining them after the first Year.

Fifthly, This Food would likewise bring great Custom to Taverns, where the Vintners will certainly be so prudent as to procure the best Receipts for dressing it to Perfection, and consequently have their Houses frequented by all the fine Gentlemen, who justly value themselves upon their Knowledge in good Eating, and a skillful Cook, who understands how to oblige his Guests, will contrive to make it as expensive as they please.

Sixthly, This would be a great Inducement to Marriage, which all wise Nations have either encouraged by Rewards, or enforced by Laws and Penalties. It would encrease the Care and Tenderness of Mothers towards their Children, when they were sure of a Settlement for Life,

to the poor Babes, provided in some sort by the Publick, to their Annual Profit instead of Expense; we should soon see an honest Emulation among the married Women, which of them could bring the fattest Child to the Market. Men would become as fond of their Wives, during the Time of their Pregnancy, as they are now of their Mares in Foal, their Cows in Calf, or Sows when they are ready to farrow, nor offer to beat or kick them (as is too frequent a Practice) for fear of a Miscarriage.

Many other Advantages might be enumerated. For Instance, the Addition of some thousand Carcasses in our Exportation of Barrell'd Beef. The Propagation of Swines Flesh, and Improvement in the Art of making good Bacon, so much wanted among us by the great Destruction of Pigs, too frequent at our Tables, which are no way comparable in Taste, or Magnificence to a well grown, fat Yearling Child, which roasted whole will make a considerable Figure at a Lord Mayor's Feast, or any other Publick Entertainment. But this, and many others, I omit being studious of Brevity.

Supposing that one thousand Families in this City, would be constant Customers for Infants Flesh, besides others who might have it at merry Meetings, particularly at Weddings and Christenings, I compute that Dublin would take off Annually about twenty thousand Carcasses, and the rest of the Kingdom (where probably they will be sold somewhat cheaper) the remaining eighty Thousand.

I can think of no one Objection, that will possibly be raised against this proposal, unless it should be urged that the Number of People will be thereby much lessened in the Kingdom. This I freely own, and t'was indeed one principal Design in offering it to the World. I desire the Reader will observe, that I calculate my Remedy for this one individual Kingdom of IRELAND, and for no other that ever was, is, or I think, ever can be upon Earth. Therefore let no Man talk to me of other Expedients: of taxing our Absentees at five Shillings a Pound: Of using neither Cloaths, nor Household Furniture, except what is our own Growth and Manufacture: Of utterly rejecting the Materials and Instruments that promote Foreign Luxury: Of curing the Expensiveness of Pride, Vanity, Idleness, and Gaming in our Women: Of introducing a Vein of Parsimony, Prudence, and Temperance: Of learning to love our Country, wherein we differ even from LAPLANDERS, and the Inhabitants of TOPINAMBOO: Of quitting our Animosities, and Factions, nor act any longer like the Jews, who were murdering one another at the very moment their City was taken: Of being a little cautious not to sell our Country and Consciences for nothing: Of teaching Landlords to have at least one Degree of Mercy towards their Tenants. Lastly, Of putting a Spirit of Honesty, Industry, and Skill into our Shopkeepers, who, if a Resolution could now be taken to buy only our Native Goods, would immediately unite to cheat and exact upon us in the Price, the Measure, and the Goodness,

nor could ever yet be brought to make one fair Proposal of just Dealing, though often and earnestly invited to it.

Therefore I repeat, let no Man talk to me of these and the like Expedients, till he hath at least some Glimpse of Hope, that there will be ever some hearty and sincere Attempt to put them in Practice.

But as to my self, having been wearied out for many Years with offering vain, idle, visionary Thoughts, and at length utterly despairing of Success, I fortunately fell upon this Proposal, which, as it is wholly new, as it hath something Solid and Real, of no Expence and little Trouble, full in our own Power, and whereby we can incur no Danger in disobliging ENGLAND. For this kind of Commodity will not bear Exportation, the Flesh being of too tender a Consistence, to admit a long Continuance in Salt, although perhaps I cou'd name a Country, which would be glad to eat up our whole Nation without it.

After all, I am not so violently bent upon my own Opinion, as to reject any Offer, proposed by wise Men, which shall be found equally Innocent, Cheap, Easy, and Effectual. But before something of that Kind shall be advanced in Contradiction to my Scheme, and offering a better, I desire the Author or Authors, will be pleased maturely to consider two Points. First, As Things now stand, how they will be able to find Food and Raiment for a hundred Thousand useless Mouths and Backs. And Secondly, There being a round Million of Creatures in Humane Figure, throughout this Kingdom, whose whole Subsistence put into a common Stock, would leave them in Debt Two Millions of Pounds Ster. adding those, who are Beggars by Profession, to the bulk of Farmers, Cottagers and Labourers, with their Wives and Children, who are Beggars in Effect: I desire those Politicians, who dislike my Overture, and may perhaps be so bold to attempt an Answer, that they will first ask the Parents of these Mortals, Whether they would not at this Day think it a great Happiness to have been sold for Food at a Year Old, in the manner I prescribe, and thereby have avoided such a perpetual Scene of Misfortunes, as they have since gone through, by the Oppressions of Landlords, the Impossibility of paying Rent without Money or Trade, the Want of common Sustenance, with neither House nor Cloaths to cover them from these Inclemencies of Weather, and the most inevitable Prospect of intailing the like, or greater Miseries, upon their Breed for ever.

I profess in the Sincerity of my Heart, that I have not the least personal Interest in endeavouring to promote this necessary Work, having no other Motive than the Publick Good of my Country, by advancing our Trade, providing for Infants, relieving the Poor, and giving some Pleasure to the Rich. I have no children, by which I can propose to get a single Penny; the youngest being nine Years Old, and my Wife past Child-bearing.

Stella's Birthday, 1718

Stella this day is thirty-four,
(We shan't dispute a year or more:)
However, Stella, be not troubled;
Although thy size and years are doubled
Since first I saw thee at sixteen,
The brightest virgin on the green;
So little is thy form declined;
Made up so largely in thy mind.

O, would it please the gods to split
Thy beauty, size, and years, and wit!
No age could furnish out a pair
Of nymphs so graceful, wise, and fair;
With half the lustre of your eyes,
With half your wit, your years, and size.
And then, before it grew too late,
How should I beg of gentle fate
(That either nymph might have her swain)
To split my worship too in twain.

JOHN GAY

(1685 - 1732)

JOHN GAY was born at Barnstaple in September, 1685. He was left an orphan at the age of ten, and was brought up by an uncle, who had him educated at Barnstaple Grammar School, and afterwards apprenticed him to a silk-mercator in London. He did not take kindly to this occupation nor continue at it long. For some years little is known of his life or of how he supported himself. He was a man of mercurial temperament; his spirits rose and fell like a barometer, and he wasted much of his life in

awaiting court preferment, to which his qualifications did not entitle him. He may have been for a time secretary to the minor dramatist Aaron Hill. His first poem, *Wine*, written in blank verse and inspired by John Philips's *Cyder*, appeared in 1708. In 1712 he was appointed secretary to the Duchess of Monmouth, widow of the ill-fated son of Lucy Walters, but he only managed to retain this post for a little over a year. In 1713 he dedicated his georgic *Rural Sports* to Pope, and so cemented a life-

long friendship. The poem is not otherwise remarkable, though superior to *The Fan* (1714), which is unreadable. There is some excellent work in *The Shepherd's Week* (1714), a collection of six pastorals which was originally intended to pour ridicule upon artificial pastorals, especially those of Ambrose Philips. Like *Joseph Andrews*, however, Gay's pastorals became far more than a mere parody; they are realistic and genuine poems, though marred in places by bad taste. In June, 1714, Gay became secretary to the Earl of Clarendon, envoy extraordinary to the court of Hanover; but the death of Queen Anne (1st August) caused Clarendon's recall. Gay's farce, *The What d'ye call It*, a kind of skit on popular tragedies, was produced in 1715, but the audience did not quite grasp its curious mixture of ludicrous words and grave gestures, and it was a failure. A "Key" to the piece was published too late to save it. *Trivia: or, the Art of Walking the Streets of London* was published in 1716. It is saved from neglect or oblivion by the valuable picture it gives of London in the time of George I. In 1717 the unfortunate farce *Three Hours after Marriage* appeared; much of it was written by Pope and Arbuthnot, but when it was most justly damned they were not sorry to let Gay take the entire responsibility for it, which he was willing to do. Gay now spent much of his time in the houses of his noble friends Lord Burlington, the Earl of Bath, Lord Harcourt, and others. In 1720 he published a two-volume collection of his poems, made a thousand pounds by it, and invested it in South Sea stock. This stock

quickly rose to the value of £20,000, but when the bubble burst he lost it all. From this time on he was patronized by the Duchess of Queensberry ("Kitty, beautiful and young"). His tragedy, *The Captives* (1724), was a comparative success. In 1727 appeared one of Gay's principal achievements, his *Fables*, which were written for the edification of the Duke of Cumberland, then a child of six, and nineteen years later the victor of Culloden. This work obtained for him the post of gentleman-usher to Princess Louisa, a child of three, but he declined to accept it. His most popular piece of work, *The Beggar's Opera*, was produced in 1728. It was written in accordance with a suggestion of Swift's that Gay should write a Newgate Pastoral. Its success was extraordinary. It was acted sixty-three times in London, and many times in all the principal towns of the three kingdoms. Its songs were inscribed on the backs of fans; its scenes were painted upon drawing-room screens. The actress who played the part of Polly became Duchess of Bolton; her life was written and pamphlets were made of her sayings and jests. It drove Italian opera into the background. Its success is hard to explain, though probably due in part to its novelty, its charming music, and the political interpretation which was given to certain episodes. Its "book" is in point of fact somewhat thin; but it must have some inexplicable vitality, for when the opera was revived in 1920 it had an unprecedented success, and was so profitable that the Income Tax authorities requested Mr. John Gay to fill in a return of the royalties he was

receiving. In 1728 he made about £800. This success encouraged him to write a sequel, *Polly* (1729), which was, however, banned by the Lord Chamberlain, who feared political allusions. This banning caused a considerable sensation; the libretto was published and its sale was pushed by the opposition so that it brought Gay £1200. Gay was now living with the Queensberrys, where he was a kind of domestic pet. The duke looked after his money, and the duchess looked after himself. He died on 4th December, 1732, after a short illness, and was interred with great pomp in Westminster Abbey.

Gay was not a particularly admirable man. He was always a child at heart, greedy, indolent, and incapable of taking his own part. Swift, Pope, and Arbuthnot all loved him, but regarded him as a kind of infant prodigy. As a poet he is never great but often charming, though he had not the charm of Prior. He had a genuine gift for song-writing, and his tuneful, sprightly songs did something, in an age of decasyllabic couplets, towards keeping English metres supple.

[Lewis Melville, *Life and Letters of John Gay*; J. C. Faber, *Gay's Poetical Works*.]

From "The Shepherd's Week"

Hobnelia, seated in a dreary vale,
In pensive mood rehearsed her piteous tale,
Her piteous tale the winds in sighs bemoan,
And pining Echo answers groan for groan.

I rue the day; a rueful day, I trow,
The woeful day, a day indeed of woe!
When Lubberkin to town his cattle drove,
A maiden fine bedight he hapt to love,
The maiden fine bedight his love retains,
And for the village he forsakes the plains.
Return, my Lubberkin, these ditties hear;
Spells will I try, and spells shall ease my care.
With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,
And turn me thrice around, around, around.

When first the year, I heard the cuckow sing,
And call with welcome note the budding spring,
I straightway set a running with such haste,
Deb'rah that won the smock scarce ran so fast.
Till spent for lack of breath, quite weary grown
Upon a rising bank I sat adown.

Then doffed my shoe, and by my troth, I swear
Therein I spied this yellow frizzled hair,
As like to Lubberkin's in curl and hue,
As if upon his comely pate it grew.
With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,
And turn me thrice around, around, around.

At eve last Midsummer no sleep I sought,
But to the field a bag of hemp-seed brought,
I scatter'd round the seed on every side,
And three times in a trembling accent cried,
This hemp-seed with my virgin hand, I sow,
Who shall my true-love be, the crop shall mow.
I straight look'd back, and if my eyes speak truth,
With his keen scythe behind me came the youth.
With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,
And turn me thrice around, around, around.

Last Valentine, the day when birds of kind
Their paramours with mutual chirpings find;
I early rose, just at the break of day,
Before the sun had chased the stars away,
A-field I went, amid the morning dew
To milk my kine (for so should huswives do)
Thee first I spied, and the first swain we see,
In spite of fortune shall our true-love be;
See, Lubberkin, each bird his partner take,
And canst thou then thy sweetheart dear forsake?
With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,
And turn me thrice around, around, around.

Last May-day fair I search'd to find a snail,
That might my secret lover's name reveal;
Upon a gooseberry bush a snail I found
For always snails near sweetest fruits abound,
I seized the vermin, home I quickly sped,
And on the hearth the milk-white embers spread,
Slow crawl'd the snail, and if I right can spell,
In the soft ashes mark'd a curious L.
Oh, may this wond'rous omen lucky prove!
For L is found in Lubberkin and Love.
With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,
And turn me thrice around, around, around.

Two hazel nuts I threw into the flame,
And to each nut I gave a sweetheart's name,
This with the loudest bounce me sore amazed,
That in a flame of brightest colour blazed.
As blazed the nut so may thy passion grow,
For 'twas thy nut that did so brightly glow.
With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,
And turn me thrice around, around, around.

As peascods once I pluck'd, I chanced to see
One that was closely fill'd with three times three,
Which when I cropp'd I safely home convey'd,
And o'er my door the spell in secret laid,
My wheel I turned, and sung a ballad new,
While from the spindle I the fleeces drew;
The latch moved up, when who should first come in
But in his proper person—Lubberkin.
I broke my yarn, surprised the sight to see,
Sure sign that he would break his word with me.
Eftsoons I joined it with my wonted sleight,
So may again his love with mine unite.
With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,
And turn me thrice around, around, around.

This lady-fly I take from off the grass,
Whose spotted back might scarlet red surpass,
Fly, Lady-Bird, North, South, or East or West,
Fly where the Man is found that I love best,
He leaves my hand, see, to the West he's flown,
To call my true-love from the faithless town.
With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,
And turn me thrice around, around, around.

This mellow pippin which I pare around,
My shepherd's name shall flourish on the ground.
I fling th' unbroken paring o'er my head,
Upon the grass a perfect L is read;
Yet on my heart a fairer L is seen,
Than what the paring makes upon the green.
With my sharp heel I three times mark the ground,
And turn me thrice around, around, around.

THOMAS PARNELL

(1679 – 1718)

THOMAS PARNELL was born in Dublin in 1679. His father, who died when the poet was six years old, was a member of an old Cheshire family, and emigrated to Ireland after the Restoration. Parnell was educated at a private school and at Trinity College, Dublin, where he graduated B.A. in 1697, M.A. in 1700, and D.D. in 1712. He was ordained deacon, though under the canonical age, in 1700, and was not slow in obtaining preferment, becoming Archdeacon of Clogher at the early age of twenty-seven. He owned a certain amount of property in land, and was always comfortably enough off, though he spent every penny of his income. He was originally a mild Whig in politics, but, like most churchmen, became a Tory in or before 1710; accordingly he became very friendly with Swift, Pope, Gay, Arbuthnot, and others of that circle, and was an active member of the Scriblerus Club. The death of his wife in 1711 affected him deeply, increasing his natural tendency to "thespleen", and aggravating his habits of intemperance, which were, however, probably not so gross as they have been alleged to be. In 1713, when Swift became Dean of St. Patrick's, he persuaded Archbishop King to transfer the prebend of Dunlavin, which he was vacating, to Parnell. Parnell was a good scholar, and gave Pope considerable help with his translation of the *Iliad*, besides writing the introductory *Essay on Homer*. He had not an easy prose style, and Pope, while publicly

praising this introduction, complained privately that the correction of it cost him as much time and trouble as the composition of it would have done. In 1716 Parnell was presented to the vicarage of Finglas, and resigned his archdeaconry. In 1717 he published a translation of the *Battle of the Frogs and Mice*, accompanied by a satirical life of Zoilus. The profits of this publication were generously given to Gay. In October, 1718, he died somewhat suddenly at Chester, on his way to Ireland.

Parnell had many good qualities which endeared him to Swift and Pope. He suffered much from fits of inordinate elation and undue depression; during the latter he withdrew himself as much as possible from his fellow-men. He hated Ireland as much as Swift did, though he was not able to express his hatred with equal energy. The best of Parnell's poems were posthumously published; Pope's edition, a worthy memorial of his friendship, appeared in 1721. Pope apparently made a judicious selection of his friend's poems; later editors have sacrificed good taste to the craze for completeness, rather to the detriment of Parnell's reputation. In his earlier days Parnell wrote society verses, not unlike those of Prior, but he was not well qualified to write in that strain. His best poems were written in the last five years of his life, under the influence of Pope, whom, however, he did not slavishly imitate. *The*

Hermit is perhaps his best-known poem; it is a good retelling of a story at least as ancient as the *Gesta Romanorum*, but has something of the air of being a "copy of verses". *A Night Piece on Death*, a pre-

cursor of the funereal school of Young and Blair, is a better poem; *The Hymn to Contentment* is also good, and was obviously known and admired by Collins. Parnell's life was written by Goldsmith.

A Night Piece on Death

By the blue taper's trembling light,
No more I waste the wakeful night,
Intent with endless view to pore,
The schoolmen and the sages o'er;
Their books from Wisdom widely stray,
Or point at best the longest way,
I'll seek a readier path, and go
Where Wisdom's surely taught below.

How deep yon azure dyes the sky!
Where orbs of gold unnumbered lye,
While thro' their ranks in silver pride,
The nether crescent seems to glide.
The slumbering breeze forgets to breathe,
The lake is smooth and clear beneath,
Where once again the spangled show
Descends to meet our eyes below.

The grounds which on the right aspire,
In dimness from the view retire;
The left presents a place of graves,
Whose wall the silent water laves,
That steeple guides thy doubtful sight,
Among the livid gleams of night,
There pass with melancholy state,
By all the solemn heaps of fate.
And think, as softly-sad you tread,
Above the venerable dead,
"Time was, like thee they life possest,
And time shall be, that thou shalt rest".

Those graves with bending osier bound,
That nameless heave the crumbled ground,
Quick to the glancing thought disclose
Where Toil and Poverty repose.

The flat smooth stones that bear a name,
The chisel's slender help to fame,
(Which ere our set of friends decay
Their frequent steps may wear away);
A middle Race of Mortals own,
Men, half-ambitious, all unknown.

The marble tombs that rise on high,
Whose dead in vaulted arches lie,
Whose pillars swell with sculptur'd stones,
Arms, angels, epitaphs and bones,
These (all the poor remains of state)
Adorn the Rich, or praise the Great;
Who while on earth in fame they live,
Are senseless of the fame they give.
Ha! while I gaze, pale Cynthia fades,
The bursting earth unveils the shades;
All slow, and wan, and wrap'd with shrouds,
They rise in visionary crowds,
And all with sober accent cry,
"Think, Mortal, what it is to die".

Now from yon black and fun'ral yew,
That bathes the charnel house with dew,
Methinks I hear a voice begin;
(Ye ravens cease your croaking din,
Ye tolling clocks, no time resound,
O'er the long lake and midnight ground)
It sends a peal of hollow groans,
Thus speaking from among the bones.

When men my scythe and darts supply,
How great a King of fears am I!
They view me like the last of things:
They make, and then they dread, my stings;
Fools! if you less provok'd your fears,
No more my sceptre-form appears.
Death's but a path that must be trod,
If Man would ever pass to God:
A port of calms, a state of ease,
From the rough rage of swelling seas.

Why then thy flowing sable stoles,
Deep pendent cypress, mourning poles,

Loose scarfs to fall athwart thy weeds,
 Long palls, drawn hearses, cover'd steeds,
 And plumes of black, that as they tread,
 Nod o'er the scutcheons of the dead?
 Nor can the parted body know,
 Nor wants the soul, these forms of woe,
 As men who long in prison dwell,
 With lamps that glimmer round the cell,
 When-e'er their suffering years are run,
 Spring forth to greet the glittering sun;
 Such joy, tho' far transcending sense,
 Have pious souls at parting hence.
 On earth, and in the body plac'd,
 A few, and evil years they waste;
 But when their chains are cast aside,
 See the glad scene unfolding wide,
 Clap the glad wing, and tow'r away,
 And mingle with the blaze of day.

ANNE FINCH, COUNTESS OF WINCHILSEA

(1661 – 1720)

ANNE KINGSMILL, daughter of Sir William Kingsmill, Bart., of Sidmonton, near Southampton, was born in 1661. She was for a time maid of honour to Mary of Modena, the Duke of York's second duchess, and in 1684 married Colonel Heneage Finch, gentleman of the bed-chamber to the Duke of York. Finch refused to take the oath of allegiance to William of Orange after the Revolution, and he and his wife retired to Eastwell Park, Kent, the seat of his nephew, the fourth Earl of Winchilsea, whom he succeeded as fifth earl in 1712. Lady Winchilsea accordingly lived

a somewhat secluded life in the country, and was much troubled by "spleen", to which malady she addressed a Pindaric ode. Her poems, mostly occasional, circulated freely in manuscript, and a collection of them was published in 1713. She was known to Pope and Rowe as "Ardelia", and considered herself as to some extent the literary descendant of "the matchless Orinda". She died in 1720, and her reputation, which was that of a lady of rank who occupied her leisure in verse-making, did not long survive her. It was revived in 1815 by Words-

worth, who, in the Prefatory Essay to the volume of poems which he issued in that year, said: "It is remarkable that, excepting the Nocturnal Reverie of Lady Winchilsea, and a passage or two in the Windsor Forest of Pope, the poetry of the period intervening between the publication of the *Paradise Lost* and the *Seasons* does not contain a single new image of external nature, and scarcely presents a familiar one from which it can be inferred that the eye of the Poet had been steadily fixed upon its object." Since this eulogy was published some of Lady Winchilsea's poems, especially the one

referred to by Wordsworth, have found their way into many anthologies, and in 1903 Miss Myra Reynolds edited the complete poetical works of the Countess, though a selection from her poems would have done more to preserve her reputation. Her *Nocturnal Reverie* is certainly a remarkable poem, as in it she describes what she has seen, not what she has read about. Her Pindaric ode is quite as bad as such compositions usually are; but much of her occasional verse is neatly turned. After a century of neglect, her reputation in the nineteenth century was perhaps unduly high.

A Nocturnal Reverie

In such a night, when every louder wind
Is to its distant cavern safe confined,
And only gentle Zephyr fans his wings,
And lonely Philomel, still waking, sings,
Or from some tree, framed for the owl's delight,
She, hollowing clear, directs the wanderer right,—
In such a night, when passing clouds give place,
Or thinly veil the heaven's mysterious face,
When in some river, overhung with green,
The waving moon and trembling leaves are seen,
When freshened grass now bears itself upright,
And makes cool banks to pleasing rest invite,
Whence spring the woodbind and the bramble-rose,
And where the sleepy cowslip sheltered grows,
Whilst now a paler hue the foxglove takes,
Yet chequers still with red the dusky brakes,
Where scattered glowworms,—but in twilight fine,—
Show trivial beauties, watch their hour to shine,
While Salisbury stands the test of every light,
In perfect charms and perfect beauty bright;
When odours, which declined repelling day,
Through temperate air uninterrupted stray,
When darkened groves their softest shadows wear,
And falling waters we distinctly hear;

When through the gloom more venerable shows
Some ancient fabric awful in repose;
While sunburned hills their swarthy looks conceal,
And swelling haycocks thicken up the vale;
When the loosed horse now, as his pasture leads,
Comes slowly grazing thro' the adjoining meads,
Whose stealing pace and lengthened shade we fear,
Till torn-up forage in his teeth we hear;
When nibbling sheep at large pursue their food,
And unmolested kine rechew the cud;
When curlews cry beneath the village-walls,
And to her straggling brood the partridge calls;
Their short-lived jubilee the creatures keep,
Which but endures, whilst tyrant Man doth sleep;
When a sedate content the spirit feels,
And no fierce light disturbs, whilst it reveals;
But silent musings urge the mind to seek
Something too high for syllables to speak;
Till the free soul to a composedness charmed,
Finding the elements of rage disarmed,
O'er all below a solemn quiet grown,
Joys in the inferior world, and thinks it like her own;
In such a night let me abroad remain,
Till morning breaks and all's confused again;
Our cares, our toils, our clamours are renewed,
Our pleasures, seldom reached, again pursued.

LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU

(1689 – 1762)

MARY PIERREPONT, the daughter of Evelyn Pierrepont, was born in 1689. Her father became fifth Earl of Kingston in 1690, and was created Marquess of Dorchester in 1706 and Duke of Kingston in 1715. She was not exactly well educated, but was given enough liberty to enable her to educate herself. In August, 1712, she made a runaway match with Edward

Wortley Montagu, a Whig politician, and a grandson of the first Earl of Sandwich, Pepys's patron. Her father had arranged for her to marry another man. For a few years the Montagus lived quietly in Yorkshire; when a Whig Government was formed at the accession of George I, Montagu became one of the commissioners of the treasury, but held this post but a short time,

as Walpole disliked him. In 1716 a pirated edition of Lady Mary's poems was issued under the title of *Court Poems*; the authorized version of these poems was called *Town Eclogues*. In 1716 Montagu was appointed ambassador to the Porte, and he and his wife resided at Constantinople for more than a year. Lady Mary's letters to her friends from Turkey are among the most interesting of all her letters. The Montagus returned to England in 1718; Lady Mary had had her own son, aged four, inoculated for smallpox according to the Turkish practice; she introduced inoculation into England on her return, and made use of her position as a leader of society to give it a vogue. She was well-known to Whig men of letters, such as Addison, Steele, and Congreve. Her extravagant friendship with Pope began before the Turkish embassy days; it continued with still further extravagances until about 1722, when it ended abruptly for no well-ascertained cause. It was said that Pope had made a declaration of love to her, and had been heartily laughed at. For some reason Pope's extravagant admiration for Lady Mary turned into a no less extravagant malignity; his rancorous references to "Sappho" in his various satires are quite unpardonable, and form one of the blackest blots on his character. In 1739 Lady Mary went abroad, and parted from her husband and family on good terms, and for no discoverable reason. Her husband, a miser who died in 1761 worth well over a million pounds, she never saw again. Her son Edward was notorious as a traveller and an

eccentric; her daughter married Lord Bute, George III's Prime Minister. Lady Mary lived for many years at Brescia and at Lovere; her letters to her daughter, though they suggest comparison with those of Madame de Sévigné, a comparison which they do not stand, are among the best letters of the eighteenth century. She returned to England after her husband's death, but died herself little more than six months after her return, on 21st August, 1762.

Lady Mary was a woman of character, with an intellect of a somewhat masculine cast. Her taste was not impeccable, either in her writings or her way of life. Horace Walpole wrote of her in 1740: "Her dress, her avarice, and her impudence must amaze any one that never heard her name. She wears a foul mob, that does not cover her greasy black locks, that hang loose, never combed or curled; an old mazarine blue wrapper, that gapes open and discovers a canvas petticoat. Her face . . . partly covered with a plaster, and partly with white paint, which for cheapness she has bought so coarse, that you would not use it to wash a chimney." Her poetical writings are of little account, but her letters, both Turkish and Italian, are admirable, and give us vivid pictures of her life and times. They were posthumously published in 1763; an additional and at least partly spurious volume appeared in 1767.

[*"George Paston", Lady Mary Wortley Montagu and her Times; L. Melville, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu; Iris Barry, Portrait of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu.*]

Letters

To Mrs. S. C.

ADRIANOPLE, April 1, O.S.

In my opinion, dear S., I ought rather to quarrel with you for not answering my Nimeguen letter of August till December, than to excuse my not writing again till now. I am sure there is on my side a very good excuse for silence, having gone such tiresome land-journeys, though I don't find the conclusion of them so bad as you seem to imagine. I am very easy here, and not in the solitude you fancy me. The great number of Greeks, French, English, and Italians, that are under our protection, make their court to me from morning till night; and, I'll assure you, are many of them very fine ladies; for there is no possibility for a Christian to live easily under this government but by the protection of an ambassador—and the richer they are, the greater is their danger.

Those dreadful stories you have heard of the plague have very little foundation in truth. I own I have much ado to reconcile myself to the sound of a word which has always given me such terrible ideas, though I am convinced there is little more in it than in a fever. As a proof of this, let me tell you that we passed through two or three towns most violently infected. In the very next house where we lay (in one of these places) two persons died of it. Luckily for me, I was so well deceived that I knew nothing of the matter; and I was made believe that our second cook had only a great cold. However, we left our doctor to take care of him, and yesterday they both arrived here in good health; and I am now let into the secret that he has had the plague. There are many that escape it; neither is the air ever infected. I am persuaded that it would be as easy a matter to root it out here as out of Italy and France; but it does so little mischief, they are not very solicitous about it, and are content to suffer this distemper instead of our variety, which they are utterly unacquainted with.

A propos of distempers, I am going to tell you a thing that will make you wish yourself here. The small-pox, so fatal, and so general amongst us, is here entirely harmless by the invention of *ingrafting*, which is the term they give it. There is a set of old women who made it their business to perform the operation every autumn, in the month of September, when the great heat is abated. People send to one another to know if any of their family has a mind to have the small-pox; they make parties for this purpose, and when they are met (commonly fifteen or sixteen together) the old woman comes with a nut-shell full of the matter of the best sort of small-pox, and asks what vein you please to have opened. She immediately rips open that you offer to her with a large needle

(which gives you no more pain than a common scratch) and puts into the vein as much matter as can lie upon the head of her needle, and after that binds up the little wound with a hollow bit of shell; and in this manner opens four or five veins. The Grecians have commonly the superstition of opening one in the middle of the forearm, one in each arm, and one on the breast, to mark the sign of the cross; but this has a very ill effect, all these wounds leaving little scars, and is not done by those who are not superstitious, who choose to have them in the legs, or that part of the arm that is concealed. The children or young patients play together all the rest of the day, and are in perfect health to the eighth. Then the fever begins to seize them, and they keep their beds two days, very seldom three. They have rarely above twenty or thirty in their faces, which never mark; and in eight days' time they are as well as before their illness. Where they are wounded, there remain running sores during the distemper, which I don't doubt is a great relief to it. Every year thousands undergo this operation; and the French ambassador says pleasantly, that they take the small-pox here by way of diversion, as they take the waters in other countries. There is no example of any one that has died in it; and you may believe I am well satisfied of the safety of this experiment, since I intend to try it on my dear little son.

I am patriot enough to take pains to bring this useful invention into fashion in England; and I should not fail to write to some of our doctors very particularly about it, if I knew any one of them that I thought had virtue enough to destroy such a considerable branch of their revenue for the good of mankind. But that distemper is too beneficial to them, not to expose to all their resentment the hardy wight that should undertake to put an end to it. Perhaps, if I live to return, I may, however, have courage to war with them. Upon this occasion admire the heroism in the heart of your friend, &c. &c.

ANTHONY ASHLEY COOPER, THIRD EARL OF SHAFTESBURY

(1671 - 1713)

ANTHONY ASHLEY COOPER, grandson of the famous first Earl of Shaftesbury, was born in Exeter House, London, on 26th February, 1671. His mother's medical attendant was Locke (q.v.), who had

arranged her marriage with Lord Ashley, the "shapeless lump" of Dryden's satire, and a man of poor intellect and physique. Cooper was educated by a learned governess, who taught him to speak Greek

and Latin, and at Winchester, where, being a shy and sensitive boy, he was thoroughly unhappy. He left school at the age of fifteen, and travelled in Italy, Germany, and France. On his return he settled down to a life of quiet study. He was a man of powerful intellect, but his health was always weak, and prevented him following a public career. He sat in Parliament, however, as member for Poole from 1695 until he succeeded his father in the earldom in 1699. His bad health drove him abroad on several occasions; he could speak French like a native, but found himself in a peculiarly congenial atmosphere in Holland. His philosophical writings occupied much of his time. The first of them to be published was the *Inquiry concerning Virtue*, which was issued by Toland without permission in 1699. Others appeared piecemeal from time to time; but in 1711 he issued an elaborate collective edition of his works, in three volumes, under the title of *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions and Times*. His works passed through ten editions in the eighteenth century, and were translated into French and German. In 1711 he went to Naples on account of his health, and died there on 4th February, 1713.

Shaftesbury was a charming man, and was well liked even by those

who disagreed with his opinions. His religious views were liberal, and though he was a sincere member of the Church of England, he got the reputation of being a deist, and his writings, which were much more readable than those of the real deists, did much to spread deistic views. Two characteristics of his philosophy were his invincible optimism, and his insistence on the doctrine of man's "moral sense", a term which he coined. His works were studied on the Continent more assiduously than in England, and are remarkable for their lack of insularity. Shaftesbury was a careful writer, and polished his style so diligently that to modern readers it appears somewhat superfine, but it is clear, and can be rhapsodical without being absurd. His humour and his good manners as a writer are delightful. He was not great as thinker or stylist, but was long thought to be so, and his influence upon eighteenth-century thought was far more profound than that of many writers who were his superiors in both capacities. The excessive esteem in which he was held during the eighteenth century has been followed, as often happens, by an equally unwarrantable neglect.

[B. Rand, *Life, Letters, and Philosophical Regimen of Shaftesbury*.]

From "Characteristics"

A Letter Concerning Enthusiasm

SECT. IV

In short, my Lord, the melancholy way of treating Religion, is that which, according to my apprehension, renders it so tragical, and in the occasion of its acting in reality such dismal Tragedies in the World. And

my Notion is, that provided we treat Religion with good Manners, we can never use too much good Humour, or examine it with too much Freedom and Familiarity. For, if it be genuine and sincere, it will not only stand the Proof, but thrive and gain advantage from thence: if it be spurious, or mix'd with any Imposture, it will be detected and expos'd.

The melancholy way in which we have been taught Religion, makes us unapt to think of it in good Humour. 'Tis in Adversity, chiefly, or in ill Health, under Affliction, or Disturbance of Mind, or Discomposure of Temper, that we have recourse to it. Tho' in reality we are never so unfit to think of it as at such a heavy and dark Hour. We can never be fit to contemplate any thing above us, when we are in no condition to look into ourselves, and calmly examine the Temper of our own Mind and Passions. For then it is we see Wrath, Fury, and Revenge, and Terrors in the Deity, when we are full of Disturbances and Fears within, and have, by Sufferance and Anxiety, lost so much of the natural Calm and Easiness of our Temper.

We must not only be in ordinary good Humour, but in the best of Humours, and in the sweetest, kindest Disposition of our Lives, to understand well what true Goodness is, and what those Attributes imply, which we ascribe with such Applause and Honour to the Deity. We shall then be able to see best, whether those Forms of Justice, those Degrees of Punishment, that Temper of Resentment, and those Measures of Offence and Indignation, which we vulgarly suppose in God, are suitable to those original Ideas of Goodness, which the same Divine Being, or Nature under him, has implanted in us, and which we must necessarily presuppose, in order to give him Praise or Honour in any kind. This, my Lord, is the Security against all Superstition: To remember, that there is nothing in God but what is Godlike; and that He is either not at all, or truly and perfectly God. But when we are afraid to use our Reason freely, even on that very Question, "Whether He really be, or not": we then actually presume him bad, and flatly contradict that pretended Character of Goodness and Greatness; whilst we discover this Mistrust of his Temper, and Fear his Anger and Resentment, in the case of this Freedom of Inquiry.

We have a notable instance of this Freedom in one of our sacred Authors. As patient as Job is said to be, it cannot be denied that he makes bold enough with God, and takes his Providence roundly to task. His friends, indeed, plead hard with him, and use all Arguments, right or wrong, to patch up Objections, and set the Affairs of Providence upon an equal foot. They make a merit of saying all the Good they can of God, at the very stretch of their Reason, and sometimes quite beyond it. But this, in Job's opinion, is flattering God, accepting of God's person, and even mocking him. And no wonder. For what merit can there be in believing God, or his Providence, upon frivolous and weak grounds?

What Virtue in assuming an Opinion contrary to the appearance of Things, and resolving to hear nothing which may be said against it? Excellent Character of the God of Truth! that he should be offended at us, for having refus'd to put the lye upon our Understandings, as much as in us lay, and be satisfy'd with us for having believ'd at a venture, and against our Reason, what might have been the greatest Falsehood in the world, for any thing we cou'd bring as a Proof or Evidence to the contrary!

It is impossible that any besides an ill-natur'd Man can wish against the Being of a God: for this is wishing against the Public, and even against one's private Good too, if rightly understood. For if a Man has not any such Ill-will to stifle his Belief, he must have surely an Unhappy Opinion of God, and believe him not so good by far as he knows Himself to be, if he imagines that an impartial Use of his Reason, in any matter of Speculation whatsoever, can make him run the risk Hereafter; and that a mean Denial of his Reason, and an Affectation of Belief in any Point too hard for his Understanding, can entitle him to any Favour in another World. This is being Sycophants in Religion, mere Parasites of Devotion. 'Tis using God as the crafty Beggars use those they address to, when they are ignorant of their Quality. The Novices amongst 'em may innocently come out, perhaps, with a Good Sir, or a Good Forsooth! But with the old Stagers, no matter whom they meet in a Coach, 'tis always Good your Honour! or Good your Ladyship! or Good your Lordship! For if there should be really a Lord in the case, we should be undone (say they) for want of giving the Title: but if the Party should be no Lord, there would be no Offence; it would not be ill taken.

And thus it is in Religion. We are highly concerned how to beg right; and think all depends upon hitting the Title, and making a good Guess. 'Tis the most beggarly Refuge imaginable, which is so mightily cry'd up, and stands as a great Maxim with many able Men; "That they should strive to have Faith, and believe to the Utmost: because if, after all, there be nothing in the matter, there will be no harm in being thus deceived; but if there be any thing, it will be fatal for them not to have believed, to the full". But they are so far mistaken, that whilst they have this Thought, 'tis certain they can never believe either to their Satisfaction and Happiness in this World, or with any advantage or Recommendation to another. For besides that our Reason, which knows the Cheat, will never rest thoroughly satisfied on such a Bottom, but turn us often a-drift, and toss us in a Sea of Doubt and Perplexity; we cannot but actually grow worse in our Religion, and entertain a worse Opinion still of a Supreme Deity whilst our Belief is founded on so injurious a Thought of him.

BERNARD MANDEVILLE

(? 1670 - 1733)

BERNARD MANDEVILLE was a Dutchman, and was born at Dort about 1670. He was educated at the Erasmus School at Rotterdam and at the University of Leyden, where he graduated doctor of medicine in 1691. Not long afterwards he emigrated to England, where he spent the rest of his life. Why he did this is not known; he may have followed William of Orange; he may have gone to England to learn the language and been attracted by the country; or, as his character might lead us to conjecture, he may have had private reasons for leaving Holland. He never acquired much fame as a doctor, and appears to have played some rather questionable part in pushing the sale of Dutch spirits. He was considered good company, though (or perhaps because) his conversation was somewhat highly spiced; he was a friend of Lord Macclesfield, then Lord Chief Justice, and was seen by Benjamin Franklin. Literary men regarded him, not unjustly, as a kind of pariah. He died on 21st January, 1733.

In 1705 Mandeville published a doggerel poem entitled *The Grumbling Hive, or Knaves turned Honest*. This little work was not remarkable in itself, but became the nucleus of Mandeville's most celebrated book, for he reissued it in 1714 with copious notes and an *Inquiry into the Origin of Moral Virtue*. The augmented book was entitled *The Fable of the Bees: or Private Vices Public Benefits. Containing*

Several Discourses to demonstrate that Human Frailties, during the degeneracy of Mankind, may be turned to the Advantage of the Civil Society, and made to supply the place of Moral Virtues. A second edition, with further augmentations, appeared in 1723, and attained wide notoriety by being presented as a nuisance by a Middlesex grand jury. Its paradoxical principle, that the prosperity of the human race depended upon the vices of its individual members, was considered to be subversive of public morality, and it was attacked by Bishop Berkeley (q.v.), John Dennis (q.v.), William Law (q.v.), Francis Hutcheson, and others. These attacks and the grand jury's presentation simply increased the sale of the book, which reached a sixth edition by 1729. Mandeville was an ingenious and vigorous writer; his style, though sometimes vulgar, is always racy, and his whimsical humour is a compensation for some of his faults of taste. His command over plain good English, not unlike that of Swift, is extraordinary, considering that he was not of English birth, and can only be paralleled by that of Joseph Conrad. His philosophy, which he intended to be the antithesis of the facile optimism of Shaftesbury, is indecently cynical; it is the philosophy of Apemantus, which contrasts with Timon's views, both before and after his eyes were opened. There is, however, much sound

common sense in Mandeville's book, and some interesting anticipations of later thought, notably of Nietzsche. Mandeville's other writings, the indecency of some of

which extends even to their titles, are now forgotten. *The Fable of the Bees* was elaborately edited by F. B. Kaye in 1925.

From "The Fable of the Bees"

Remark (R)

Honour in its Figurative Sense is a Chimera without Truth or Being, an Invention of Moralists and Politicians, and signifies a certain Principle or Virtue not related to Religion, found in some Men that keeps 'em close to their Duty and Engagements whatever they be; as for Example, a Man of Honour enters a Conspiracy with others to murder a King; he is obliged to go thorough Stich with it; and if overcome by Remorse or Good-nature he startles at the Enormity of his Purpose, discovers the Plot, and turns a Witness against his Accomplices, he then forfeits his Honour, at least among the Party he belonged to. The Excellency of this Principle is, that the Vulgar are destitute of it, and it is only to be met with in People of the better sort, as some Oranges have kernels, and others not, tho' the outside be the same. In great Families it is like the Gout, generally counted Hereditary, and all Lords Children are born with it. In some that never felt any thing of it, it is acquired by Conversation and Reading (especially of Romances) in others by Preferment; but there is nothing that encourages the Growth of it more than a Sword, and upon the first wearing of one, some People have felt considerable Shoots of it in four and twenty Hours.

The chief and most important Care a Man of Honour ought to have, is the Preservation of this Principle, and rather than forfeit it, he must lose his Employments and Estates, nay, Life itself; for which reason, whatever Humility he may shew by way of Good-breeding, he is allow'd to put an inestimable Value upon himself, as a Possessor of this invisible Ornament. The only Method to preserve this Principle, is to live up to the Rules of Honour, which are Laws he is to walk by: Himself is oblig'd always to be faithful to his Trust, to prefer the public Interest to his own, not to tell lies, nor defraud or wrong any body, and from others to suffer no Affront, which is a Term of Art for every Action designedly done to undervalue him.

The Men of ancient Honour, of which I reckon Don Quixote to have been the last upon record, were very nice Observers of all these Laws, and a great many more than I have named; but the Moderns seem to be more remiss; they have a profound Veneration for the last of 'em, but they pay not an equal Obedience to any of the other, and whoever

will but strictly comply with that I hint at, shall have abundance of Trespasses against all the rest conniv'd at.

A Man of Honour is always counted impartial, and a Man of Sense of course; for no body ever heard a Man of Honour that was a Fool: For this Reason, he has nothing to do with the Law, and is always allow'd to be a Judge in his own Case; and if the least Injury be done either to himself or his Friend, his Relation, his Servant, his Dog, or any thing which he is pleased to take under his Honourable Protection, Satisfaction must be forthwith demanded; and if it proves an Affront, and he that gave it likewise a Man of Honour, a Battle must ensue. From all this it is evident, that a Man of Honour must be possessed of Courage, and that without it his other Principle would be no more than a Sword without a Point. Let us therefore examine what Courage consists in, and whether it be, as most People will have it, a real Something that valiant Men have in their Nature distinct from all their other Qualities or not.

There is nothing so universally sincere upon Earth, as the Love which all Creatures, that are capable of any, bear to themselves; and as there is no Love but what implies a Care to preserve the thing beloved, so there is nothing more sincere in any Creature than his Will, Wishes, and Endeavours to preserve himself. This is the Law of Nature, by which no Creature is endued directly with any Appetite or Passion but what either directly or indirectly tends to the Preservation either of himself or his Species.

The Means by which Nature obliges every Creature continually to stir in this Business of Self-Preservation, are grafted in him, and (in Man) call'd Desires, which either compel him to crave what he thinks will sustain or please him, or command him to avoid what he imagines might displease, hurt, or destroy him. These Desires or Passions have all their different Symptoms by which they manifest themselves to those they disturb, and from that variety of Disturbances they make within us, their various Denominations have been given them, as has been shewn already in Pride and Shame.

The Passion that is rais'd in us when we apprehend that Mischief is approaching us, is call'd Fear: The Disturbance it makes within us is always more or less violent in proportion, not of the Danger, but our Apprehension of the Mischief dreaded, whether real or imaginary. Our Fear then being always proportion'd to the Apprehension we have of the Danger, it follows, that whilst that Apprehension lasts, a Man can no more shake off his Fear than he can a Leg or an Arm. In a Fright it is true, the Apprehension of Danger is so sudden, and attacks us so lively, (as sometimes to take away Reason and Senses) that when 'tis over we often don't remember that we had any Apprehension at all; but from the Event, 'tis plain we had it, for how could we have been frighten'd if we had not apprehended that some Evil or other was coming upon us?

HENRY ST. JOHN, VISCOUNT
BOLINGBROKE

(1678 – 1751)

HENRY ST. JOHN was born at Battersea in 1678. His father, who had the same name, succeeded as fourth baronet (the creation dated back to 1611, the year of the foundation of the order), and was raised to the peerage in 1716. St. John was educated at Eton, but probably not at Oxford, though he received an honorary degree there after he had risen to political eminence. In 1700 he married an heiress, whom he treated badly, being as eminent for libertinism as he was for ability. In 1701 he obtained a seat in the House of Commons, attaching himself to Harley and the Tories. He at once gained influence, and became Secretary of War in 1704, when only twenty-six years of age, though he retired with the ministry in 1708. He continued, however, to maintain a constant intercourse with the queen, who preferred him to her other counsellors, and on the overthrow of the Whig ministry in 1710, after the Sacheverell episode, he became one of the Secretaries of State. In 1712 he was called to the House of Lords by the title of Viscount Bolingbroke, and in 1713, against much popular opposition, concluded the Peace of Utrecht. At this period the Tory leaders were intriguing to counteract the inevitable accession of power which the Whigs would receive under the House of Hanover; but shortly after the conclusion of the peace a contention fatal to the party broke

out between the Lord High Treasurer, the vacillating Harley, Earl of Oxford, and the impetuous and energetic Bolingbroke. Swift vainly endeavoured to end the quarrel. At last Queen Anne dismissed Oxford and made Bolingbroke Prime Minister, but died herself four days later. The Whigs at once assumed the power and proclaimed the Elector king. Bolingbroke, dismissed by King George while yet in Germany, fled to France in March, 1715, to escape the inevitable impeachment by which, in the autumn of that year, he was deprived of his peerage and banished. James III, the Pretender, invited him to Lorraine and made him his Secretary of State, but dismissed him in 1716 on a suspicion of treachery. He remained for some years longer in France, where (his first wife having died) he married the Marquise de Villette, niece of Madame de Maintenon, occupying himself with various studies. In 1723, after a judicious transference of part of his wife's fortune to one of the king's mistresses, he was permitted to return to England, and was restored to most of his privileges, except his seat in the House of Lords. He joined the opposition to the Walpole ministry, which he attacked during eight years in *The Craftsman* and in pamphlets with such vigour and skill that in 1735 he thought it prudent to return to France. In 1742, on the fall of Walpole, he

came back, but was again disappointed in his political ambitions, and retired to Battersea, where he died in 1751.

Bolingbroke's reputation both as statesman and author was immense. Pope looked on him as something almost superhuman, and said: "When the comet appeared to us a month or two ago I had sometimes an imagination that it might possibly be come to our world to carry him home, as a coach comes to one's door for other visitors." This great reputation has disappeared almost as completely as the comet itself. As a statesman, Bolingbroke was a corrupt and self-seeking opportunist; his historical writings are mostly ephemeral and insincere; his philosophical works are shallow. It was some of the last named, which were posthumously published by David Mallet (q.v.), that made Dr. Johnson say: "Sir, he (Bolingbroke) was a scoundrel and a coward; a scoundrel for charging a blunderbuss against religion and morality; a coward, because he had no resolution to fire it off himself, but left

half a crown to a beggarly Scotchman, to draw the trigger after his death." When critics had discovered that Bolingbroke's matter was not of any great weight, they praised his style, but even that has not much to recommend it to us now. It is the pompous and insincere style of a rhetorician; indeed Bolingbroke's chief fame in his lifetime was that of an orator. *Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona*; there were many great orators before the days of Hansard. To literary historians Bolingbroke is chiefly known as the friend of Swift, Arbuthnot, and Pope, the inspirer of *The Essay on Man*, and the founder (1711) of the "Brothers" club, a Tory club intended to rival the more famous Whig Kit-cat Club. Some of his writings have historical value; the best of them from the literary point of view are his *Letter to Windham* (1717) and *The Idea of a Patriot King* (1749).

[Walter Sichel, *Bolingbroke and his Times*; J. Churton Collins, *Bolingbroke, a Historical Study*; A. Hassall, *The Life of Viscount Bolingbroke*.]

From "A Letter to Sir William Windham"

(Written in the year 1717)

That I might avoid being questioned and quoted in the most curious and most babbling town in the world, I related what had passed to three or four of my friends, and hardly stirred abroad, during a fortnight, out of a little lodging which very few people knew of. At the end of this term the marshal of Berwick came to see me, and asked me what I meant, to confine my self to my chamber, when my name was trumpeted about in all the companies of Paris, and the most infamous stories were spread concerning me. This was the first notice I had, and it was soon followed by others. I appeared immediately in the world, and found there was hardly a scurrilous tongue which had not been let loose

on my subject; and that those persons, whom the duke of Ormond, and earl of Mar must influence, or might silence, were the loudest in defaming me.

Particular instances wherein I had failed were cited; and, as it was the fashion for every Jacobite to affect being in the secret, you might have found a multitude of vouchers to facts, which, if they had been true, could in the nature of them be known to very few persons.

This method, of beating down the reputation of a man by noise and impudence, imposed on the world at first, convinced people who were not acquainted with me, and staggered even my friends. But it ceased in a few days to have any effect against me. The malice was too gross to pass upon reflection. These stories died away almost as fast as they were published, for this very reason, because they were particular.

They gave out, for instance, that I had taken to my own use a very great sum of the chevalier's money, when it was notorious that I had spent a great sum of my own in his service; and never would be obliged to him for a farthing: in which case, I believe, I was single. Upon this head, it was easy to appeal to a very honest gentleman, the queen's treasurer at St. Germain's, through whose hands, and not through mine, went the very little money which the chevalier had.

They gave out, that whilst he was in Scotland he never heard from me, tho' it was notorious that I sent him no less than five expresses during the six weeks which he consumed in this expedition. It was easy, on this head, to appeal to the persons, to whom my dispatches had been committed.

These lies, and many others of the same sort, which were founded on particular facts, were disproved by particular facts, and had not time, at least at Paris, to make any impression. But the principal crime, with which they charged me then, and the only one which since that time they have insisted upon, is of another nature. This part of their accusation is general, and it cannot be refuted without doing what I have done above, deducing several facts, comparing these facts together, and reasoning upon them; nay, that which is worse, is, that it cannot be fully refuted without the mention of some facts, which, in my present circumstances, it would not be very prudent, tho' I should think it very lawful for me, to divulge. You see that I mean the starving the war in Scotland, which it is pretended might have been supported, and might have succeeded too, if I had procured the succours which were asked, nay, if I had sent a little powder. This the Jacobites, who affect moderation and candour, shrug their shoulders at: they are sorry for it, but lord Bolingbroke can never wash himself clean of this guilt; for these succours might have been obtained; and a proof that they might, is, that they were so by others. These people leave the cause of this mis-management doubtful, between my treachery and my want of capacity. The pretender, with all the false

charity and real malice of one who sets up for devotion, attributes all his misfortunes to my negligence.

The letters which were writ by my secretary, above a year ago, into England; the marginal notes which have been made since to the letter from Avignon; and what is said above, have set this affair in so clear a light, that whoever examines, with a fair intention, must feel the truth, and be convinced by it. I cannot, however, forbear to make some observations on the same subject here. It is even necessary that I should do so in the design of making this discourse the foundation of my justification to the Tories at present, and to the whole world in time.

There is nothing which my enemies apprehend so much as my justification: and they have reason. But they may comfort themselves with this reflection, that it will be a misfortune, which will accompany me to my grave, that I suffered a chain of accidents to draw me into such measures and such company; that I have been obliged to defend myself against such accusations and such accusers; that, by associating with so much folly, and so much knavery, I am become the victim of both; that I was distressed by the former, when the latter would have been less grievous to me, since it is much better in business to be yoked to knaves than fools; and that I put into their hands the means of loading me, like the scape-goat, with all the evil consequences of their folly.

ALLAN RAMSAY

(1686 – 1758)

ALLAN RAMSAY was born at Leadhills, Lanarkshire, on 15th October, 1686. His father, who was collaterally descended from the house of Dalhousie, was manager of some lead-mines; his mother was the daughter of an Englishman who was instructor of the miners. His father died while Ramsay was an infant; his mother married a bonnet-laird, who allowed Ramsay to remain at the Crawford village school until he was fourteen. In 1700 his mother died, and in 1701 his stepfather apprenticed him to a wigmaker in Edinburgh. As soon as his apprenticeship was

ended, Ramsay set up as a wig-maker, prospered comfortably, married, and settled down. He joined the Jacobite "Easy Club" in 1712, and addressed to it or wrote for its delectation many of his early poems. He was the club's laureate for the last few months of its existence, which terminated, not unnaturally, in 1715. Every member of the club had to adopt a pseudonym; Ramsay was known first as Isaac Bickerstaffe and afterwards as Gavin Douglas. His choice of *noms-de-guerre* was happy; for he managed to link the Edinburgh of his day with Pope, Gay, and

Arbuthnot, and to reintroduce it to the old Scottish poets, often misnamed the Scottish Chaucerians. After the dissolution of the club, Ramsay issued many of his poems as penny broadsheets; in or before 1719 he gave up his wigmaking business and set up as a bookseller and publisher. In 1716 he published the old Scots poem *Christ's Kirke on the Greene* (attributed to James I and to James V, but probably by neither). He added a coarse but vigorous canto of his own, and to a reprint of 1718 he added yet another canto. His fame was now widespread, and when in 1721 he issued his collected poems, he made by this publication the substantial sum of four hundred guineas. A volume of *Fables and Tales* followed in the next year. Between 1724 and 1727 he published his rather famous collection of poetry, *The Tea-Table Miscellany*, which contains many poems by himself and his friends, as well as some old ballads and Caroline lyrics. This is, in spite of faults, an admirable collection, and its popularity and influence were great. In 1724 *The Ever Green, being a collection of Scots Poems wrote by the Ingenious before 1600* began to appear. This valuable pioneer work drew its pieces mainly from the *Bannatyne MS.*, and rescued Dunbar, Henryson, and others from virtual oblivion. Ramsay was neither scholar nor antiquarian; he loved the old poems as literature, and did not hesitate to "improve" his text where he thought it necessary to do so. For this he has been blamed, perhaps unwisely; his book has been called a "monument of editorial stupidity", but Ramsay acted like a man of his day, when editors

had unlimited power over their texts. It is only since philology became a science that editors have lost all jurisdiction, even over commas and capitals. In 1725 Ramsay published what was in his day his most celebrated work, the pastoral drama of *The Gentle Shepherd*. Although it was acted four years after its publication, it was not intended for the stage. It contains a sufficient story and some excellent pictures of country life, slightly but not ludicrously artificial. In 1726 Ramsay removed his shop to the Luckenbooths, at the sign of Jonson's and Drummond's heads. There he opened a lending library, the first in Scotland. A further collection of his poems followed in 1728. Gay visited him, Pope corresponded with him, and he was patronized by the Scottish nobility and gentry. In 1730 he wisely decided to write no more, on account of his advancing years, lest any feeble work should lose him the reputation he had won by his earlier writings. *O si sic omnes!* In 1755 he retired to an octagonal house on the north side of the Castle Rock, where he died on 7th January, 1758.

Ramsay wrote some excellent poems, of many different kinds. The difficulty of assessing the exact degree of his excellence is very great, as in many of his poems he worked over old material, and it is impossible to say how much credit is due to him and how much to some unknown predecessor. His English and his more serious poems are not of much account; his happiest vein is to be found in his vernacular mock-elegies, many of which are unsuitable for insertion in this book. He had a genuine lyric gift too, but

his taste for low-comedy was his strongest point. His comic gifts were sufficiently strong to raise what was merely parochial into being of permanent interest. His *Ever Green* reintroduced Scotland to her ancient poets, forty-one years before Percy published his *Reliques*. His original poems, in-

cluding *The Gentle Shepherd*, show a distinct though not complete return to nature. He is, perhaps, of less importance in literary history as a poet than as a precursor of Burns, and a pioneer in the publication of the works of the "makaris".

[O. Smeaton, *Allan Ramsay*.]

The Gentle Shepherd

PATIE

My Peggy is a young thing,
Just enter'd in her teens,
Fair as the day, and sweet as May,
Fair as the day, and always gay.
My Peggy is a young thing,
And I'm not very auld,
Yet well I like to meet her at
The wauking of the fauld.

My Peggy speaks sae sweetly,
Whene'er we meet alane,
I wish nae mair to lay my care,—
I wish nae mair of a' that's rare.
My Peggy speaks sae sweetly,
To a' the lave I'm cauld;
But she gars a' my spirits glow,
At wauking of the fauld.

My Peggy smiles sae kindly,
Whene'er I whisper love,
That I look down on a' the town,—
That I look down upon a crown.
My Peggy smiles sae kindly,
It makes me blyth and bauld;
And naething gi'es me sic delight
As wauking of the fauld.

My Peggy sings sae saftly,
When on my pipe I play.
By a' the rest it is confest,—
By a' the rest, that she sings best.

My Peggy sings sae softly,
And in her sangs are tauld,
With innocence, the wale o' sense,
At wauking of the fauld.

This sunny morning, Roger, cheers my blood,
And puts all nature in a jovial mood.
How heartsome is't to see the rising plants,—
To hear the birds chirm o'er their pleasing rants!
How halesome is't to snuff the cawler air,
And all the sweets it bears, when void of care!
What ails thee, Roger, then? what gars thee grane?
Tell me the cause of thy ill-season'd pain.

ROGER

I'm born, O Patie! to a thrawart fate.
I'm born to strive with hardships sad and great!
Tempests may cease to jaw the rowan flood,
Corbies and tods to grein for lambkins' blood,
But I, opprest with never-ending grief,
Maun ay despair of lighting on relief.

PATIE

The bees shall loath the flower, and quit the hive,
The saughs on boggie ground shall cease to thrive,
Ere scornfu' queans, or loss of warldly gear,
Shall spill my rest, or ever force a tear!

ROGER

Sae might I say; but it's no easy done
By ane whase saul's sae sadly out of tune.
You have sae saft a voice, and slid a tongue,
You are the darling of baith auld and young,
If I but ettle at a sang, or speak,
They dit their lugs, syne up their leglens cleek,
And jeer me hameward frae the loan or bught,
While I'm confus'd with mony a vexing thought.
Yet I am tall, and as well built as thee,
Nor mair unlikely to a lass's ee;
For ilka sheep ye have, I'll number ten;
And should, as ane may think, come farther ben.

(From *Act I, Sc. I.*)

HENRY CAREY

(? 1692 - 1743)

HENRY CAREY is said to have been a natural son of George Savile, Marquess of Halifax, "the Trimmer". His mother was a school-mistress, and he for a time earned a livelihood by teaching music in schools. He afterwards won some fame as a writer of lively verse and as the author of many burlesques and opera libretti. He was able to compose music for some of his words, but he had no deep knowledge of musical technique. He had a great reputation as a wit; Sir John Hawkins said of him: "In all the songs and poems written by him on wine, love, and such kind of subjects, he seems to have manifested an inviolable regard for decency and good manners." Carey died at his house in Great Warner Street, Clerkenwell, on 4th October, 1743. Rumour said that he committed suicide; but the newspaper of the following day merely said: "Yesterday morning Mr. H. Carey, well known to the musical world for his droll compositions, got out of bed from

his wife in perfect health and was soon after found dead." Edmund Kean was his great-grandson.

Carey added one word to the English language, wrote a famous burlesque, wrote the words and music of a universally known and entirely admirable song, and perhaps wrote the words and music of a song less admirable but even more universally sung. The word which he added to the language was "Namby-Pamby", which he coined in his excellent parody of Ambrose Philips (q.v.); his famous burlesque was *Chrononhotonthologos* (1734), which delighted Scott many years later, and of which several phrases survive; his best song is *Sally in our Alley*; his putative song is *God Save the King*. His authorship of the national anthem has neither been established nor demolished by those who have gone into the matter; it is reasonably probable that he wrote the words and adapted the music. Carey's poems were edited by F. T. Wood in 1930.

Sally in our Alley

Of all the girls that are so smart
 There's none like pretty Sally;
 She is the darling of my heart,
 And she lives in our alley.
 There is no lady in the land
 Is half so sweet as Sally;
 She is the darling of my heart,
 And she lives in our alley.

Her father he makes cabbage-nets,
And through the streets does cry 'em;
Her mother she sells laces long
To such as please to buy 'em;
But sure such folks could ne'er beget
So sweet a girl as Sally!
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.

When she is by, I leave my work,
I love her so sincerely;
My master comes like any Turk,
And bangs me most severely;
But let him bang his bellyful,
I'll bear it all for Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.

Of all the days that's in the week
I dearly love but one day—
And that's the day that comes betwixt
A Saturday and Monday;
For then I'm dressed all in my best
To walk abroad with Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.

My master carries me to church,
And often am I blamed
Because I leave him in the lurch
As soon as text is namèd;
I leave the church in sermon-time
And slink away to Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.

When Christmas comes about again,
O! then I shall have money;
I'll hoard it up, and box it all,
I'll give it to my honey;
I would it were ten thousand pound,
I'd give it all to Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.

My master and the neighbours all
 Make game of me and Sally,
 And, but for her, I'd better be
 A slave and row a galley;
 But when my seven long years are out,
 O, then I'll marry Sally;
 O, then we'll wed, and then we'll bed—
 But not in our alley!

JAMES THOMSON

(1700 – 1748)

JAMES THOMSON was born at Ednam, Roxburghshire, on 11th September, 1700. His father was parish minister of Ednam, but two months after the poet's birth went to Southdean. Thomson was educated at the parish school and at Jedburgh; he at first intended to follow his father's profession, and entered Edinburgh University in 1715 to study divinity. In the next year his father died, as the result, one tradition says, of imprudently attempting to lay a ghost. Thomson remained nearly ten years at the university, but did not distinguish himself academically, and found his theological studies distasteful. Some of his early verses were printed in the *Edinburgh Miscellany* of 1720, and this success made him decide on going to London to seek his fortune as a man of letters. To London he went by sea, accordingly, in February, 1725; a few weeks later his mother died, and he never revisited Scotland. In London his letters of introduction were stolen by a pickpocket, but he soon made himself known to certain men of note, and for a few months acted as tutor to the small son of Lord

Binning at East Barnet. In 1726 he published *Winter*, which he dedicated to the Speaker, Sir Spencer Compton. Its success was great and tolerably rapid. *Summer*, dedicated to Bubb Dodington, appeared in 1727; *Spring*, dedicated to the Countess of Hertford, followed it in 1728; and *The Seasons* was completed in 1730 by the publication of *Autumn*, dedicated to Arthur Onslow. By this time Thomson was famous, and was acquainted with Pope, Arbuthnot, Gay, and all the "wits" of the time. *The Seasons* was a profitable book, and before the fourth part was published the poet had made £1000 from the first three parts. *Britannia* (1729), a patriotic poem, is a poor piece of work. In 1729 Thomson made his first bid for popularity and profit as a dramatist. *Sophonisba*, which was produced in that year, was a poor imitation of Otway, and was not a success. One line of it, "Oh! Sophonisba, Sophonisba, Oh", has attained immortality, though the story that a wag in the gallery, on hearing it, immediately shouted out "Oh! Jemmy Thomson, Jemmy

Thomson, Oh!" is probably too good to be true. In 1730 Thomson was appointed tutor to the son of the Solicitor-General, Sir Charles Talbot (afterwards Lord Chancellor); he accompanied his pupil to France and Italy, returning towards the end of 1731. His experience of other countries confirmed him in his opinion of the superiority of Great Britain, and inspired him to write what he considered his masterpiece, *Liberty*, published in five parts (Ancient and Modern Italy Compared, Greece, Rome, Britain, and The Prospect) between 1734 and 1736. Dr. Johnson, in common with many less omnivorous readers, failed to get through this poem, and said of it that "an enumeration of examples to prove a position which nobody denied, as it was from the beginning superfluous, must quickly grow disgusting". Lyttelton, with the best of intentions, condensed its five parts into three, but it is not readable in either form. In 1733 Talbot secured for Thomson the sinecure appointment of secretary of briefs to the Court of Chancery, with a salary of £300 a year. He lost this post after Talbot's death in 1737, owing to his unwillingness to apply for his reappointment; but was given a pension of £100 by Frederick, Prince of Wales, to whose political party he was more or less attached; and in 1744 he was appointed Surveyor-General of the Leeward Islands, being allowed to do his surveying by deputy. In 1736 he bought a cottage in Kew Foot Lane, where he lived for the rest of his life. In 1738 he produced his second play, *Agamemnon*, based on Æschylus, but with an undercurrent of political allusion which

did not commend it to the Government. *Edward and Eleonora* (1739), another tragedy, reminiscent in places of Euripides' *Alcestis*, was banned by the censor, but was printed. In 1740 Thomson and his friend David Mallet (q.v.) combined to write *The Masque of Alfred*, which was performed, with music by Arne, before the Prince of Wales at Cliefden House, Buckinghamshire. This piece has no merit, but contains the famous song *Rule Britannia*, which Arne's spirited air has kept alive. It is uncertain which of the two authors was responsible for the words, but it is probable that the credit of them (if credit be due) should be given to Thomson. In 1744 Thomson published a revised edition of *The Seasons*, with very considerable additions, amounting in all to over a thousand lines, as well as numerous alterations. An interleaved copy of the 1738 edition in the British Museum exhibits Thomson's manuscript corrections, and also those of another hand, long believed to be Pope's but now considered to be that of an amanuensis. *Tancred and Sigismunda*, the least bad of Thomson's plays, appeared in 1745; it was a success, and held the stage at intervals until 1819. In 1748 he published his second great poem, *The Castle of Indolence*, in Spenserian stanzas. This had been on the stocks for fifteen years; it progressed at an average rate of eight lines a month. It is a charming poem, polished and musical; Thomson has managed to follow his model skilfully and yet produce a poem that is entirely his own. Not long after the publication of this poem, Thomson caught a severe chill through allow-

ing himself to be rowed from Hammersmith to Kew after being heated by a rapid walk. He died on 27th August, 1748, and was buried in Richmond parish church. His uninspired tragedy *Coriolanus* was acted in 1749 for the benefit of his sisters.

Thomson's reputation, which was at one time very great, rests entirely upon his *Seasons* and his less popular but no less admirable *Castle of Indolence*. His minor poems and his tragedies are of no account. *The Seasons*, whether intentionally or not, inaugurated a new era in English poetry. In it Nature for the first time took precedence over Man. It was an antidote to the artificial school of poetry of which Pope was the head. Thomson was born and bred in the country; his paternal grandfather was a gardener; so he had an acquired and inherited love for country scenes and life. He had, moreover, poetical gifts of a very striking kind; he wrote with his eye firmly fixed on the object he was describing, and so could make his readers see the scenes he depicts. Moreover, he was happy in his choice of a subject; *The Seasons* appealed to many who were not as a general rule lovers of poetry, as well as to good judges of literature. It was obviously good poetry, yet was

not difficult or too lofty for an ordinary mind to grasp. Its popularity lasted for more than a century after Thomson's death, when it was ousted from its position by Tennyson's poems. *The Seasons* was inspired by Virgil's *Georgics*, though its debt to the Latin poem is general, not particular. Its blank verse is, of course, modelled upon that of Milton, though Thomson was well acquainted with the *Cyder* of John Philips (q.v.), and was affected by his modifications of the Miltonic metre. *The Castle of Indolence* was originally intended to be a short semi-autobiographical and half playful poem. It grew into a very beautifully executed allegory. It not only employed Spenser's intricate stanza with the utmost skill and artistry; it restored to English poetry an air of hazy suggestiveness, "where more is meant than meets the ear", which was conspicuously absent from the works of Pope and of the writers of the couplet. In his return to Nature and in his return to old models Thomson was the herald, though from afar off, of the Romantic Revival.

[Léon Morel, *James Thomson, sa vie et ses œuvres*; G. C. Macaulay, *Thomson* (English Men of Letters Series); W. Bayne, *James Thomson*.]

From "Spring"

Now, when the first foul torrent of the brooks,
Swell'd with the vernal rains, is ebb'd away—
And, whitening, down their mossy-tinctured stream
Descends the billowy foam—now is the time,
While yet the dark-brown water aids the guile,
To tempt the trout. The well dissembled fly,

The rod fine-tapering with elastic spring,
Snatch'd from the hoary steed the floating line,
And all thy slender watery stores, prepare.
But let not on thy hook the tortured worm,
Convulsive, twist in agonizing folds;
Which, by rapacious hunger swallow'd deep,
Gives, as you tear it from the bleeding breast
Of the weak, helpless, uncomplaining wretch,
Harsh pain and horror to the tender hand.

When, with his lively ray, the potent sun
Has pierced the streams, and roused the finny race,
Then, issuing cheerful, to thy sport repair;
Chief should the western breezes curling play,
And light o'er ether bear the shadowy clouds.
High to their fount, this day, amid the hills,
And woodlands warbling round, trace up the brooks;
The next, pursue their rocky-channell'd maze,
Down to the river, in whose ample wave
Their little naiads love to sport at large.
Just in the dubious point, where with the pool
Is mix'd the trembling stream, or where it boils
Around the stone, or from the hollow'd bank
Reverted plays in undulating flow,
There throw, nice-judging, the delusive fly;
And, as you lead it round in artful curve,
With eye attentive mark the springing game.
Straight as above the surface of the flood
They wanton rise, or urged by hunger leap,
Then fix, with gentle twitch, the barb'd hook;
Some lightly tossing to the grassy bank,
And to the shelving shore slow-dragging some,
With various hand proportion'd to their force.
If yet too young, and easily deceived,
A worthless prey scarce bends your pliant rod,
Him, piteous of his youth, and the short space
He has enjoy'd the vital light of heaven,
Soft disengage, and back into the stream
The speckled infant throw. But should you lure
From his dark haunts, beneath the tangled roots
Of pendent trees, the monarch of the brook,
Behoves you then to ply your finest art.
Long time he, following cautious, scans the fly
And oft attempts to seize it, but as oft
The dimpled water speaks his jealous fear.

At last, while haply o'er the shaded sun
Passes a cloud, he desperate takes the death,
With sullen plunge. At once he darts along,
Deep-struck, and runs out all the lengthen'd line;
Then seeks the farthest ooze, the sheltering weed,
The cavern'd bank, his old secure abode;
And flies aloft, and flounces round the pool,
Indignant of the guile. With yielding hand,
That feels him still, yet to his furious course
Gives way, you, now retiring, following now,
Across the stream, exhaust his idle rage;
Till, floating broad upon his breathless side,
And to his fate abandon'd, to the shore
You gaily drag your unresisting prize.

From "Winter"

To thy loved haunt return, my happy muse:
For now, behold, the joyous winter-days,
Frosty, succeed; and through the blue serene,
For sight too fine, the ethereal nitre flies—
Killing infectious damps, and the spent air
Storing afresh with elemental life.
Close crowds the shining atmosphere; and binds
Our strengthen'd bodies in its cold embrace,
Constringent; feeds, and animates our blood;
Refines our spirits, through the new-strung nerves,
In swifter sallies darting to the brain—
Where sits the soul, intense, collected, cool,
Bright as the skies, and as the season keen.
All Nature feels the renovating force
Of Winter, only to the thoughtless eye
In ruin seen. The frost-concocted glebe
Draws in abundant vegetable soul,
And gathers vigour for the coming year.
A stronger glow sits on the lively cheek
Of ruddy fire: and luculent along
The purer rivers flow; their sullen deeps,
Transparent, open to the shepherd's gaze,
And murmur hoarser at the fixing frost.
What art thou, frost? and whence are thy keen stores
Derived, thou secret all-invading power,
Whom even the illusive fluid cannot fly?

Is not thy potent energy, unseen,
Myriads of little salts, or hook'd, or shaped
Like double wedges, and diffused immense
Through water, earth, and ether? Hence at eve
Steam'd eager from the red horizon round,
With the fierce rage of Winter deep suffused,
An icy gale, oft shifting, o'er the pool
Breathes a blue film, and in its mid career
Arrests the bickering stream. The loosen'd ice,
Let down the flood, and half dissolved by day,
Rustles no more; but to the sedgy bank
Fast grows, or gathers round the pointed stone—
A crystal pavement, by the breath of heaven
Cemented firm; till, seized from shore to shore,
The whole imprison'd river growls below.
Loud rings the frozen earth, and hard reflects
A double noise; while, at his evening watch,
The village dog deters the nightly thief;
The heifer lows; the distant waterfall
Swells in the breeze; and, with the hasty tread
Of traveller, the hollow-sounding plain
Shakes from afar. The full ethereal round,
Infinite worlds disclosing to the view,
Shines out intensely keen; and, all one cope
Of starry glitter, glows from pole to pole.
From pole to pole the rigid influence falls,
Through the still night, incessant, heavy, strong,
And seizes Nature fast. It freezes on;
Till morn, late rising o'er the drooping world,
Lifts her pale eye unjoyous. Then appears
The various labour of the silent night:
Prone from the dripping eave, and dumb cascade,
Whose idle torrents only seem to roar,
The pendent icicle; the frost-work fair,
Where transient hues, and fancied figures, rise;
Wide-spouted o'er the hill, the frozen brook,
A livid tract, cold-gleaming on the morn;
The forest bent beneath the plumy wave;
And by the frost refined the whiter snow,
Incrusted hard, and sounding to the tread
Of early shepherd, as he pensive seeks
His pining flock, or from the mountain top,
Pleased with the slippery surface, swift descends.

From "The Castle of Indolence"

Canto I

Ye gods of quiet, and of sleep profound!
Whose soft dominion o'er this castle sways,
And all the widely silent places round,
Forgive me, if my trembling pen displays
What never yet was sung in mortal lays.
But how shall I attempt such arduous string?
I who have spent my nights, and nightly days,
In this soul-deadening place loose-loitering:
Ah! how shall I for this uprear my moulted wing?

Come on, my muse, nor stoop to low despair,
Thou imp of Jove, touch'd by celestial fire!
Thou yet shalt sing of war, and actions fair,
Which the bold sons of Britain will inspire;
Of ancient bards thou yet shalt sweep the lyre;
Thou yet shalt tread in tragic pall the stage,
Paint love's enchanting woes, the hero's ire,
The sage's calm, the patriot's noble rage,
Dashing corruption down through every worthless age.

The doors, that knew no shrill alarming bell,
Ne cursèd knocker plied by villain's hand,
Self-open'd into halls, where, who can tell
What elegance and grandeur wide expand;
The pride of Turkey and of Persia land?
Soft quilts on quilts, on carpets carpets spread,
And couches stretch'd around in seemly band;
And endless pillows rise to prop the head;
So that each spacious room was one full-swelling bed;

And everywhere huge cover'd tables stood,
With wines high-flavour'd and rich viands crown'd;
Whatever sprightly juice or tasteful food
On the green bosom of this earth are found,
And all old ocean 'genders in his round,
Some hand unseen these silently display'd,
Even undemanded by a sign or sound;
You need but wish, and, instantly obey'd,
Fair ranged the dishes rose, and thick the glasses play'd.

Here freedom reign'd, without the least alloy;
 Nor gossip's tale, nor ancient maiden's gall,
 Nor saintly spleen, durst murmur at our joy,
 And with envenom'd tongue our pleasures pall.
 For why? there was but one great rule for all;
 To wit, that each should work his own desire,
 And eat, drink, study, sleep, as it may fall,
 Or melt the time in love, or wake the lyre,
 And carol what, unbid, the muses might inspire.

The rooms with costly tapestry were hung,
 Where was inwoven many a gentle tale,
 Such as of old the rural poets sung,
 Or of Arcadian or Sicilian vale;
 Reclining lovers, in the lonely dale,
 Pour'd forth at large the sweetly tortured heart;
 Or, sighing tender passion, swell'd the gale,
 And taught charm'd echo to resound their smart;
 While flocks, woods, streams around, repose and peace impart.

Those pleased the most, where, by a cunning hand,
 Depainted was the patriarchal age;
 What time Dan Abraham left the Chaldee land,
 And pastured on from verdant stage to stage,
 Where fields and fountains fresh could best engage.
 Toil was not then; of nothing took they heed,
 But with wild beasts the sylvan war to wage,
 And o'er vast plains their herds and flocks to feed:
 Bless'd sons of nature they! true golden age indeed!

(*Stanzas 31-37.*)

JOHN DYER

(? 1700 - 1758)

JOHN DYER was born at Aberglasney, Carmarthenshire, in or perhaps before 1700. His father was a prosperous solicitor. He was educated at Westminster, and went into his father's office; but when his father died he abandoned his

legal career, which had no attractions for him, studied art under Jonathan Richardson, and adopted the precarious profession of an itinerant artist, travelling principally in his native Wales and the English counties adjacent to it.

In 1726 his best poem, *Grongar Hill*, celebrating a hill not far from his native town, appeared in more or less "Pindaric" form; next year it was rewritten in the metre of *L'Allegro* and republished. Dyer, like so many artists, visited Italy, and in 1740 published *The Ruins of Rome*, a not very attractive piece of blank verse of the prize-poem type. By 1741 he realized that he was not going to succeed as a painter, so he was ordained, and married a wife who was descended from Shakespeare. He held in succession several small livings in Leicestershire and Lincolnshire. In 1757 he published his most ambitious poem, *The Fleece*, a didactic poem in four books dealing with the manufacture of wool. It was not popular when published, and is now difficult to read, though not devoid of merit.

As Johnson says, "The woolcomber and the poet appear to me such discordant natures, that an attempt to bring them together is to *couple the serpent with the fowl*". In the following year, 1758, Dyer died.

Grongar Hill, a poem of 158 lines, constitutes Dyer's chief claim to remembrance. It is charmingly simple, fresh, and direct, and the poet sees clearly in his mind's eye what he describes. Its metre is almost as refreshing as its subject-matter, as it is charmingly loose and easy. Nothing quite like *Grongar Hill* had been written since Marvell's garden poems. During the thirty years which elapsed between the publication of his best and that of his most elaborate work, Dyer's somewhat thin stream of poetry evaporated considerably.

From "Grongar Hill"

Now, I gain the mountain's brow,
What a landskip lies below!
No clouds, no vapours intervene,
But the gay, the open scene
Does the face of nature show,
In all the hues of heaven's bow!
And, swelling to embrace the light,
Spreads around beneath the sight.

Old castles on the cliffs arise.
Proudly towering in the skies;
Rushing from the woods, the spires
Seem from hence ascending fires;
Half his beams Apollo sheds
On the yellow mountain-heads,
Gilds the fleeces of the flocks,
And glitters on the broken rocks.

Below me trees unnumbered rise,
Beautiful in various dyes;
The gloomy pine, the poplar blue,

The yellow beech, the sable yew,
The slender fir, that taper grows,
The sturdy oak with broad-spread boughs;
And beyond the purple grove,
Haunt of Phillis, queen of love,
Gaudy as the opening dawn,
Lies a long and level lawn
On which a dark hill, steep and high,
Holds and charms the wandering eye.
Deep are his feet in Towy's flood,
His sides are cloth'd with waving wood,
And ancient towers crown his brow,
That cast an awful look below;
Whose ragged walls the ivy creeps,
And with her arms from falling keeps;
So both a safety from the wind
On mutual dependence find.

'Tis now the raven's bleak abode;
'Tis now th' apartment of the toad;
And there the fox securely feeds;
And there the poisonous adder breeds
Conceal'd in ruins, moss and weeds;
While, ever and anon, there falls
Huge heaps of hoary mouldered walls.
Yet time has seen, that lifts the low,
And level lays the lofty brow,
Has seen this broken pile compleat,
Big with the vanity of state;
But transient is the smile of fate!
A little rule, a little sway,
A sun beam in a winter's day,
Is all the proud and mighty have
Between the cradle and the grave.

EDWARD YOUNG

(1683 - 1765)

EDWARD YOUNG was born in the summer of 1683 at Upham, near Winchester. His father was rector of Upham, and subsequently Dean

of Salisbury. Young was educated at Winchester College, of which his father was a Fellow, and at Oxford. He matriculated at New

College, migrated to Corpus, and finally became a Fellow of All Souls. He graduated B.C.L. in 1714 and D.C.L. in 1719. According to Sir Herbert Croft, "There are those who related that when first Young found himself independent . . . he was not the ornament to religion and morality which he afterwards became". According to Pope, Young passed "a foolish youth, the sport of peers and poets: but his having a very good heart enabled him to support the clerical character when he assumed it, first with decency, and afterwards with honour". He was certainly a friend of Bubb Dodington and of the infamous Duke of Wharton; it is unlikely that their evil communications entirely failed to corrupt him. He excelled at writing fulsome dedications, and seems to have thought that flattery was the "Open Sesame" to worldly prosperity. He was doomed to be a disappointed man, and never attained the success as a layman or the preferment as a clergyman to which he believed himself to be entitled. Young began his career as a poet by writing addresses and odes of various kinds; one on the death of Queen Anne was, like Janus, two-faced, as it welcomed the coming and sped the parting monarch with equal enthusiasm. *Busiris*, a tragedy, was produced at Drury Lane in 1719; its chief title to fame is that it was ridiculed by Fielding. *The Revenge* appeared at the same theatre in 1721. In 1725 Young began to publish a series of seven satires, *The Universal Passion*, collected in 1728. These satires brought £3000 to their author, and contain many quotable lines; but, as Swift said

of them, "they should either have been more angry or more merry". They appeared before Pope began his career as a satirist. *Ocean* and other odes appeared about 1728; some of these poems might well find a place in an anthology of humorous verse. Young "assumed the clerical character" in 1727, when he was forty-four years of age; in 1728 he became chaplain to George II, and in 1730 was presented to the rectory of Welwyn, Hertfordshire. He married a daughter of the Earl of Lichfield in 1731; the death of his wife in 1741, as well as that of his stepdaughter in 1736 and of her husband in 1740, inspired him to write his masterpiece, *The Complaint, or Night Thoughts on Life, Death, and Immortality*, divided into nine "nights", and published between 1742 and 1745. This poem was immensely famous in its day, was translated into French, German, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Swedish, and Magyar, and even still is not without readers. It is a portentous monologue, containing much commonplace thought and many lines which have become proverbial. It was said that the infidel Lorenzo of the poem was the poet's own son, but this is disproved by the fact that he was only eight years of age at the time of the composition of *Night Thoughts*. It is a pioneer poem of the school which took for its motto "Let's talk of graves, of worms and epitaphs". There is more true pathos in the single line of Virgil—*sunt lacrimae rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt*—which Young placed on his title page, than in all his nine nights of meditations. It was, however, mainly on the strength of this poem that

German criticism set Young above Milton. Young's other works include a third play, *The Brothers*, written before 1726 but not produced until 1753, its profits being given to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, and *Resignation* (1762). In 1761 he was made clerk of the closet to the princess-dowager. He died on 5th April, 1765.

The great reputation of Young has almost entirely disappeared, but it is not inexplicable like that of Tupper and other writers who have now fallen on evil days. As Johnson says, "with all his defects, he was a man of genius and a poet"; and almost all his works contain oases of good writing amid a somewhat barren wilderness. He was not a good artist or a good self-critic, though it should be remem-

bered in his favour that he wished to suppress some of his unhappy essays in adulation and other less worthy poems. His wishes were, unfortunately, not respected by his later editors. As Sir Herbert Croft pertinently inquires, "Shall the gates of repentance be shut only against literary sinners?" Many of Young's lines, however, have outlived his reputation, such as:

Procrastination is the thief of
time;
A fool at forty is a fool indeed;
and All men think all men mortal
but themselves.

It is not uncommon for these and other quotations from Young to be misattributed to Pope.

[W. Thomas, *Le Poète Edward Young*; H. C. Shelley, *The Life and Letters of Edward Young*.]

Night Thoughts

FROM "NIGHT I"

By nature's law, what may be, may be now,
There's no prerogative in human hours.
In human hearts what bolder thought can rise
Than man's presumption on to-morrow's dawn?
Where is to-morrow? In another world.
For numbers this is certain; the reverse
Is sure to none; and yet on this Perhaps,
This Peradventure, infamous for lies,
As on a rock of adamant we build
Our mountain-hopes, spin out eternal schemes,
As we the Fatal Sisters would outspin,
And, big with life's futurities, expire.

Not e'en Philander had bespoke his shroud,
Nor had he cause; a warning was denied:
How many fall as sudden, not as safe;
As sudden, though for years admonish'd home!
Of human ills that last extreme beware;

Beware, Lorenzo! a slow sudden death.
How dreadful that deliberate surprise!
Be wise to-day; 'tis madness to defer:
Next day the fatal precedent will plead;
Thus on, till wisdom is push'd out of life.
Procrastination is the thief of time;
Year after year it steals, till all are fled,
And to the mercies of a moment leaves
The vast concerns of an eternal scene.
If not so frequent, would not this be strange?
That 'tis so frequent, this is stranger still.

Of man's miraculous mistakes this bears
The palm, "That all men are about to live,"
For ever on the brink of being born.
All pay themselves the compliment to think
They one day shall not drivel, and their pride
On this reversion takes up ready praise;
At least their own; their future selves applauds:
How excellent that life they ne'er will lead!
Time lodged in their own hands is Folly's vails;
That lodged in Fate's, to wisdom they consign;
The thing they can't but purpose they postpone:
'Tis not in folly not to scorn a fool;
And scarce in human wisdom to do more.
All promise is poor dilatory man,
And that through ev'ry stage: when young, indeed,
In full content we sometimes nobly rest,
Unanxious for ourselves, and only wish,
As duteous sons, our fathers were more wise.
At thirty, man suspects himself a fool;
Knows it at forty, and reforms his plan;
At fifty, chides his infamous delay;
Pushes his prudent purpose to resolve;
In all the magnanimity of thought
Resolves, and re-resolves; then dies the same.

And why? because he thinks himself immortal.
All men think all men mortal but themselves,
Themselves, when some alarming shock of fate
Strikes thro' their wounded hearts the sudden dread;
But their hearts wounded, like the wounded air,
Soon close; where pass'd the shaft no trace is found,
As from the wing no scar the sky retains,
The parted wave no furrow from the keel,
So dies in human hearts the thought of death.

E'en with the tender tear, which nature sheds
 O'er those we love, we drop it in their grave.
 Can I forget Philander? that were strange!
 O my full heart!—But should I give it vent,
 The longest night, though longer far, would fail,
 And the lark listen to my midnight song.

The sprightly lark's shrill matin wakes the morn;
 Grief's sharpest thorn hard pressing on my breast,
 I strive, with wakeful melody, to cheer
 The sullen gloom, sweet Philomel! like thee,
 And call the stars to listen: ev'ry star
 Is deaf to mine, enamour'd of thy lay.
 Yet be not vain; there are who thine excel,
 And charm through distant ages. Wrapt in shade,
 Pris'ner of darkness! to the silent hours
 How often I repeat their rage divine,
 To lull my griefs, and steal my heart from woe!
 I roll their raptures, but not catch their fire.
 Dark though not blind, like thee, Mæonides!
 Or, Milton, thee! ah, could I reach your strain!
 Or his who made Mæonides our own.
 Man, too, he sung; immortal man I sing.
 Oft bursts my song beyond the bounds of life;
 What now but immortality can please?
 O had he pressed his theme, pursued the track
 Which opens out of darkness into day!
 O had he, mounted on his wing of fire,
 Soar'd where I sink, and sung immortal man,
 How had it blest mankind, and rescued me!

WILLIAM COLLINS

(1721 – 1759)

WILLIAM COLLINS was born at Chichester on Christmas Day, 1721. His father was a well-to-do hatter who was twice Mayor of Chichester. He was educated at Winchester and at Magdalen College, Oxford, where he was elected to a demyship in 1741 and graduated B.A. in 1743. He contributed verses to

magazines while still at school, and wrote his *Persian Eclogues* at the age of seventeen. They were published in 1742; fifteen years later they were republished and renamed *Oriental Eclogues*. They were considered by his contemporaries to be his best work, but are insipid and commonplace; the

substitution of Persia for the conventional Arcadia of pastorals is not a change for the better. After leaving Oxford, Collins was undecided what career to adopt. His health was weak, and he was already the victim of a morbid irresolution. His uncle considered him "too indolent even for the army"; he had no inclination to take holy orders; so he decided to attempt a literary career in London, though quite unfit to succeed in such an undertaking. He cherished many ambitious schemes—a history of the Revival of Learning, an annotated translation of Aristotle's *Poetics*, and so on—but they all came to nothing. His slender volume of *Odes*, however, appeared in 1746, and contained some of the best odes in English, and quite the best of those written in the eighteenth century. His *Ode on the Popular Superstitions of the Highlands*, addressed to John Home, was written in 1749 but not published until 1788, when it enlivened the pages of the *Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh*. Collins's debility gradually altered into acute mania. He tried to improve his health by travel, without success. It is to be feared that his madness was religious mania; for when Johnson saw him his sole reading was the New Testament, and he said: "I have but one book, but that is the best." Moreover, he used to howl in a horrible manner in the cloisters of Chichester Cathedral when the choir was singing. He was confined for a time in a mad-house in Chelsea, but returned eventually to his native Chichester, where he died on 12th June, 1759.

So completely had he been forgotten that his friend and admirer, Dr. Johnson, antedated his death by three years.

There is no English poet whose reputation is based upon an output as slender as that of Collins. His complete works contain little more than fifteen hundred lines, and even in this small amount of work there are numerous imperfections. He was a man not exempt from the faults of his age; his poetry is cold and too full of personified abstractions. But at his best he is very good; the beautiful unrhymed nocturne *Ode to Evening*, the *Dirge in Cymbeline*, *How Sleep the Brave*, and parts of the odes *To Liberty* and *The Passions* are in the very front rank of English poetry. Collins could sing, unlike almost all the eighteenth-century poets, even the best of them. We may, perhaps, be forgiven for quoting a poem which is a parody of Tupper, but which aptly, though ironically, brings out the difference between Collins and his fellow-poets:

I heard the wild notes of the lark
floating far over the blue sky,
And my foolish heart went after him,
and lo! I blessed him as he rose;
Foolish! for far better is the trained
boudoir bullfinch,
Which pipeth the semblance of a
tune, and mechanically draweth
up water.

Collins at his best sang like a lark; most of his contemporaries form a bevy of boudoir bullfinches. Collins's poems were edited, together with those of Gray, in 1917 by A. L. Poole and C. Stone; and by Edmund Blunden in 1929.

Ode to Evening

If aught of oaten stop, or pastoral song,
May hope, chaste eve, to soothe thy modest ear,
Like thy own solemn springs,
Thy springs, and dying gales,

O nymph reserved, while now the bright-haired sun
Sits in yon western tent, whose cloudy skirts,
With brede ethereal wove,
O'erhang his wavy bed:

Now air is hushed, save where the weak-eyed bat
With short, shrill shriek, flits by on leathern wing;
Or where the beetle winds
His small but sullen horn,

As oft he rises, 'midst the twilight path,
Against the pilgrim borne in heedless hum:
Now teach me, maid composed,
To breathe some softened strain,

Whose numbers, stealing through thy darkening vale,
May, not unseemly, with its stillness suit,
As, musing slow, I hail
Thy genial loved return!

For when thy folding star arising shows
His paly circlet, at his warming lamp
The fragrant hours, and elves,
Who slept in flowers the day,

And many a nymph who wreathes her brows with sedge,
And sheds the freshening dew, and, lovelier still,
The pensive pleasures sweet
Prepare thy shadowy car.

Then lead, calm votaress, where some sheety lake
Cheers the lone heath, or some time-hallowed pile
Or up-land fallows grey
Reflect its last cool gleam.

WILLIAM COLLINS

But when chill blustering winds, or driving rain,
Forbid my willing feet, be mine the hut,
That from the mountain's side,
Views wilds, and swelling floods,

And hamlets brown, and dim-discovered spires;
And hears their simple bell, and marks o'er all
Thy dewy fingers draw
The gradual dusky veil.

While spring shall pour his showers, as oft he wont,
And bathe thy breathing tresses, meekest eve!
While summer loves to sport
Beneath thy lingering light;

While fallow autumn fills thy lap with leaves;
Or winter, yelling through the troublous air,
Affrights thy shrinking train,
And rudely rends thy robes;

So long, sure-found beneath the sylvan shed,
Shall fancy, friendship, science, rose-lipp'd health,
Thy gentlest influence own,
And hymn thy favourite name!

Ode

How sleep the brave who sink to rest,
By all their country's wishes blessed!
When spring, with dewy fingers cold,
Returns to deck their hallowed mould,
She there shall dress a sweeter sod,
Than fancy's feet have ever trod.

By fairy hands their knell is rung;
By forms unseen their dirge is sung;
There honour comes, a pilgrim grey,
To bless the turf that wraps their clay;
And freedom shall awhile repair,
To dwell, a weeping hermit, there!

WILLIAM SHENSTONE

(1714 - 1763)

WILLIAM SHENSTONE was born on 13th November, 1714, at the Leasowes, near Halesowen, now in Worcestershire but then included in Shropshire. He was educated by Sarah Lloyd, whom he afterwards celebrated in his best-known poem, at Halesowen Grammar School, and at Pembroke College, Oxford, where he did not graduate. His father died when he was ten, and his mother when he was eighteen; a guardian was accordingly appointed for him. While at Oxford he published, for private circulation, a small volume of poems entitled *Poems on various occasions, written for the Entertainment of the Author, and printed for the Amusement of a few Friends prejudiced in his Favour*. A first draft of *The Schoolmistress* appeared in this volume. *The Judgement of Hercules* was published in 1741, and in the following year a revised version of *The Schoolmistress* appeared. It is a poem of about 300 lines written in the Spenserian stanza, and conceived in a spirit half burlesque and half serious. The original version had a ludicrous Index which emphasized the burlesque aspect of the poem. It is a pleasing and well-turned poem, which is usually valued as a serious contribution to poetry rather than as a burlesque. It is interesting to note that its publication preceded by six years that of Thomson's Spenserian *Castle of Indolence*. Shenstone's other poems, including the well-known *Pastoral Ballad*, appeared in Dodsley's collections. Shenstone's guardian died

in 1745, and, at the age of thirty-one, he found himself master of the Leasowes, and commenced his career as a pioneer landscape gardener, in which capacity he was better known than as a poet. The Leasowes acquired some celebrity as a well-laid-out estate, and was visited by many wealthy and famous persons. Unfortunately Shenstone was not a rich man, and spent more money on his grounds than he could afford; he became, therefore, discontented and depressed, as may be seen in his mildly interesting *Letters*. He made, however, many literary friends, among whom was Thomas Percy; if he had lived longer he would probably have been co-editor of the celebrated *Reliques*. He died of fever on 11th February, 1763.

Shenstone's poems show many of the worst and a few of the better features of the taste of his time. They are all artificial, and at their best are pretty rather than beautiful. *The Schoolmistress* is, however, an excellent trifle; the *Pastoral Ballad*, four poems in one, is pleasing; nor is the mildly satirical *Progress of Taste* without merit. His elegies, which were warmly admired and too faithfully imitated by Burns, have no attractions for us to-day. His smooth and sentimental verse is sometimes not unlike that of Tibullus; but he was not a master of metre. His anapaests are less intolerable than those of many poets, and provide a welcome change from the heroic couplet. Jonson in his *Discoveries*

has aptly described the class of poets to which Shenstone belongs: "Others there are that have no composition at all; but a kind of tuning and riming fall in what they write. It runs and slides, and only makes a

sound. Women's poets they are called, as you have women's tailors.

They write a verse as smooth, as soft as cream,

In which there is no torrent, nor scarce stream."

From "The Schoolmistress"

Ah me! full sorely is my heart forlorn,
To think how modest worth neglected lies,
While partial Fame doth with her blasts adorn
Such deeds alone, as pride and pomp disguise;
Deeds of ill sort, and mischievous emprise:
Lend my thy clarion, Goddess! let me try
To sound the praise of Merit, ere it dies;
Such as I oft have chanced to espy,
Lost in the dreary shades of dull obscurity.

In every village mark'd with little spire,
Embower'd in trees, and hardly known to fame,
There dwells, in lowly shed and mean attire,
A matron old, whom we schoolmistress name,
Who boasts unruly brats with birch to tame;
They griev'd sore, in piteous durance pent,
Awed by the power of this relentless dame,
And oftentimes, on vagaries idly bent,
For unkempt hair, or task unconn'd, are sorely shent.

And all in sight doth rise a birchen tree,
Which Learning near her little dome did stow,
Whilom a twig, of small regard to see,
Though now so wide its waving branches flow,
And work the simple vassals mickle woe;
For not a wind might curl the leaves that blew,
But their limbs shudder'd, and their pulse beat low,
And as they look'd, they found their horror grew,
And shaped it into rods, and tingled at the view.

So have I seen (who has not, may conceive),
A lifeless phantom near a garden placed,
So doth it wanton birds of peace bereave,
Of sport, of song, of pleasure, of repast;
They start, they stare, they wheel, they look aghast;

Sad servitude! such comfortless annoy
May no bold Briton's riper age e'er taste!
Ne superstition clog his dance of joy,
Ne vision empty, vain, his native bliss destroy.

Near to this dome is found a patch so green,
On which the tribe their gambols do display,
And at the door imprisoning board is seen,
Lest weakly wights of smaller size should stray,
Eager, perdie, to bask in sunny day!
The noises intermix'd, which thence resound,
Do Learning's little tenement betray;
Where sits the dame, disguis'd in look profound,
And eyes her fairy throng, and turns her wheel around.

Her cap, far whiter than the driven snow,
Emblem right meet of decency does yield;
Her apron, dyed in grain, as blue, I trow,
As is the harebell that adorns the field;
And in her hand, for sceptre, she does wield
Tway birchen sprays; with anxious fear entwined,
With dark distrust, and sad repentance fill'd,
And stedfast hate, and sharp affliction join'd,
And fury uncontroll'd, and chastisement unkind.

Few but have kenn'd, in semblance meet portray'd
The childish faces, of old Aeol's train,
Libs, Notus, Auster: these in frowns array'd,
How then would fare on earth, or sky, or main,
Were the stern god to give his slaves the rein?
And were not she rebellious breasts to quell,
And were not she her statutes to maintain,
The cot no more, I ween, were deem'd the cell
Where comely Peace of Mind, and decent Order dwell.

A russet stole was o'er her shoulders thrown,
A russet kirtle fenced the nipping air;
'Twas simple russet, but it was her own;
'Twas her own country bred the flock so fair;
'Twas her own labour did the fleece prepare;
And, sooth to say, her pupils, ranged around,
Through pious awe, did term it passing rare;
For they in gaping wonderment abound,
And think, no doubt, she been the greatest wight on ground.

(*Stanzas 1-8.*)

MARK AKENSIDE

(1721 - 1770)

MARK AKENSIDE was born at Newcastle-on-Tyne on 9th November, 1721. His father was a Presbyterian butcher. When he was seven years of age his foot was permanently injured by a cleaver in his father's shop. Akenside was something of an infant prodigy. He was educated at the free school and a private academy in Newcastle, and at a very early age contributed poems to the magazines. One of these poems, *The Virtuoso* (1737), was in Spenserian stanzas, and appeared several years before Thomson's *Castle of Indolence* and Shenstone's *Schoolmistress*. In 1739 Akenside went to Edinburgh University, at the expense of certain Newcastle dissenters, to study for the Non-conformist ministry. He soon, however, deserted theology for medicine, honourably returning the money which had been advanced by his fellow-townsmen. He rapidly acquired the rudiments of medicine, and practised as a surgeon in Newcastle at the age of twenty. In 1743 he went up to London, and early in the following year published his principal poem, *The Pleasures of Imagination*, which consisted of two thousand lines of blank verse divided into three books. As Akenside was only seventeen when he began and twenty-two when he completed this poem, it may be imagined that its philosophy is not very deep. It has borrowed a good deal of its thought from Addison and from Shaftesbury. For this poem he was paid the large sum of £120 by Dodsley; and he found

himself famous at three and twenty. In 1744 he went to Leyden, and, after apparently only a month's preliminary studies, graduated there as doctor of physic on 16th May. He tried unsuccessfully to supplant a firmly established physician at Northampton, and eventually gravitated to London. His *Epistle to Curio*, an able attack on Pulteney, appeared in 1744, and a volume of rather stiff odes in the following year. At the age of twenty-four Akenside's career as a poet practically ended, nor did he, after that age, show much ability for mental growth in other directions, though his powers of assimilation were good. He became arrogant and bumptious in the extreme, and, though he rose high in his profession, he would have risen higher had he been more affable. He took his M.D. at Cambridge in 1753, and in the same year was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society. In 1754 he became a Fellow of the College of Physicians, and afterwards was Gulstonian and Croonian lecturer. He had a fatal propensity for rewriting his poems and altering them for the worse; in 1757 he remodelled his *Pleasures of Imagination*, but did not improve it. Both versions of his poem are often published. In 1759 he became principal physician to Christ's Hospital, where he used to order the servants to precede him with brooms, and prevent the patients from too nearly approaching him. In 1761 he was appointed physician to the queen, and accordingly

changed his party. He died of fever on 23rd June, 1770.

Akenside's chief work is undoubtedly *The Pleasures of Imagination*, though he is perhaps seen at his best in his *Epistle to Curio*, and his *Hymn to the Naiads* has merit. His principal poem appeals solely to the intellect; it is a tepid piece of rhetorical exposition rather

than a poem, and finds few readers nowadays. Akenside was a decidedly unpoetic poet; as a man he was absurdly conceited. He has won an unenviable immortality in the pages of Smollett; the doctor who, in the forty-fourth chapter of *Peregrine Pickle*, gave an entertainment in the manner of the ancients, was modelled upon Akenside.

From "Pleasures of Imagination"

Say, why was man so eminently raised
 Amid the vast Creation; why ordained
 Through life and death to dart his piercing eye,
 With thoughts beyond the limit of his frame;
 But that the Omnipotent might send him forth,
 In sight of mortal and immortal powers,
 As on a boundless theatre, to run
 The great career of justice; to exalt
 His generous aim to all diviner deeds;
 To chase each partial purpose from his breast;
 And through the mists of passion and of sense,
 And through the tossing tide of chance and pain,
 To hold his course unfaltering, while the voice
 Of truth and virtue, up the steep ascent
 Of nature, calls him to his high reward,
 The applauding smile of Heaven? Else wherefore burns
 In mortal bosoms this unquenched hope,
 That breathes from day to day sublimer things,
 And mocks possession? Wherefore darts the mind
 With such resistless ardour to embrace
 Majestic forms; impatient to be free,
 Spurning the gross control of wilful might;
 Proud of the strong contention of her toils;
 Proud to be daring? Who but rather turns
 To Heaven's broad fire his unconstrained view,
 Than to the glimmering of a waxen flame?
 Who that, from Alpine heights, his labouring eye
 Shoots round the wide horizon, to survey
 Nilus or Ganges rolling his bright wave
 Through mountains, plains, through empires black with shade,
 And continents of sand, will turn his gaze,

To mark the windings of a scanty rill,
That murmurs at his feet? The high-born soul
Disdains to rest her heaven-aspiring wing
Beneath its native quarry. Tired of earth
And this diurnal scene, she springs aloft,
Through fields of air; pursues the flying storm;
Rides on the vollied lightning through the heavens;
Or, yoked with whirlwinds and the northern blast,
Sweeps the long tract of day. Then high she soars
The blue profound, and hovering round the sun
Beholds him pouring the redundant stream
Of light; beholds his unrelenting sway
Bend the reluctant planets to absolve
The fated rounds of Time. Thence far effused
She darts her swiftness up the long career
Of devious comets; through its burning signs
Exulting measures the perennial wheel
Of Nature, and looks back on all the stars,
Whose blended light, as with a milky zone,
Invests the orient. Now amazed she views
The empyreal waste, where happy spirits hold,
Beyond this concave heaven, their calm abode,
And fields of radiance, whose unfading light
Has travell'd the profound six thousand years,
Nor yet arrives in sight of mortal things.
Even on the barriers of the world untired
She meditates the eternal depth below;
Till, half recoiling, down the headlong steep
She plunges; soon o'erwhelmed and swallow'd up
In that immense of being. There her hopes
Rest at the fated goal. For from the birth
Of mortal man, the Sovereign Maker said,
That not in humble nor in brief delight,
Nor in the fading echoes of renown,
Power's purple robes, nor pleasure's flowery lap,
The soul should find enjoyment; but from these
Turning disdainful to an equal good,
Through all the ascent of things enlarge her view,
Till every bound at length should disappear,
And infinite perfection close the scene.

SAMUEL RICHARDSON

(1689 – 1761)

SAMUEL RICHARDSON was born in 1689, somewhere in Derbyshire. His father was a joiner who left London after the failure of Monmouth's rebellion, in which he was suspected of having been implicated. Richardson was one of nine children, and was originally intended for the Church. His father, however, was not able to send him to a good school or to the university. The tradition that he was at Christ's Hospital is unsupported by evidence. He remained in the country until he was about thirteen. Even at that age he preferred the society of women to that of boys, and composed love-letters for those of his lady friends who had no talent for that species of composition. Before he was eleven years old he gave a taste of his qualities as a moralist by writing a letter to a widow nearly forty years his senior on the sin of talking scandal. In 1706, being unable to go to the university, he compromised with his love of books by binding himself apprentice to a stationer. His career resembled that of the Industrious Apprentice, though he did not, as some biographers say, marry his master's daughter according to programme; his wife was the daughter of another man of the same name. He worked as a compositor and corrector of the press, and set up business as a printer on his own account in 1719. He printed twenty-six volumes of the *Journals* of the House of Commons, as well as the *Daily Journal* and the *Daily Gazette*.

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teer. He prospered exceedingly, and eventually became Master of the Stationers' Company (1754) and Law Printer to the King (1760). For many years he was something of a valetudinarian, dieting himself and drinking nothing but water. His prosperous but uneventful life came to an end on 4th July, 1761, when he was carried off by an apoplectic fit.

During all his career as a printer he had done a certain amount of journey-work, such as making up indexes and writing dedications; he was fifty years old before he attempted more ambitious flights in literature. In 1739 two booksellers, Rivington and Osborne, being aware of his proficiency in the epistolary art, asked him to write a volume of letters which would serve rustic or uneducated readers as a complete guide to letter-writing. The composition of this unambitious work, which appeared anonymously in 1741, inspired him to write *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded* (1740), a story, in the form of a series of letters, intended "to cultivate the principles of virtue and religion in the minds of the youth of both sexes". This it did by recounting the story of a servant-girl who turned her mistress's son from a would-be seducer to a devoted husband by means of much patient perseverance. Crude as this story seems to sophisticated readers of modern novels, it exactly hit the taste of the period and achieved a great success. It was a story of real life—of low life indeed it might be called—and so presented

a welcome contrast to the frothy and impossible romances which had been in vogue. Also, though passages in it are not quite in keeping with modern taste, it quite definitely took up its stand on the side of morality, albeit a morality of a low and calculating kind. *Pamela* was the forerunner of a long series of novels and novelettes dealing with the virtues of the poor and the vices of the rich—a theme which drew from Lord Tolloller the indignant protest that

Hearts just as pure and fair
May beat in Belgrave Square
As in the lowly air
Of Seven Dials.

One of the immediate consequences of this novel was the publication of no fewer than sixteen imitations, skits, and remarks on it; by far the most illustrious being Fielding's *Joseph Andrews* (1742), which was originally intended as a burlesque, but which became a novel of life and manners. (See *Fielding*.) Richardson's own sequel to *Pamela* was, like most sequels, of little merit.

His second novel, *Clarissa, or the History of a Young Lady*, was published in seven vols. (afterwards eight) between Nov. 1747, and Dec. 1748. This mode of publication undoubtedly increased the interest aroused by the book, which is, however, its author's masterpiece. Its fame spread all over the Continent, and it is interesting to note that the Abbé Prévost had to make in his translation certain omissions to suit the delicacy of French taste. *Clarissa*, which is also written in the form of letters, was intended as a companion-piece to *Pamela*, and was designed to show that

virtue was not invariably rewarded in this world. The chief fault of this novel is its inordinate length. It is far more mature than *Pamela*, and shows a deeper knowledge of the human heart. It reduced all Europe to tears, and had a great effect upon continental fiction. It should be noted that Richardson was enough of an artist (or moralist) to withstand the importunate petitions of his friends that this story should be given a happy ending.

Richardson's third and last novel, *The History of Sir Charles Grandison*, was published in 1753. He intended to call it *The Good Man*, but wisely decided on second thoughts that such a name would decrease the sale of the book. It was a story with a purpose, in that respect resembling Becker's *Gallus* and *Charicles*, being designed to illustrate the life of an absolutely good man. Sir Charles is as great a prig as Tennyson's King Arthur, and is equally "tolerable and not to be endured". But the book has many good qualities, and is in a few respects a ripper book than *Clarissa*. Richardson wrote no more during the last eight years of his life, but made an anthology of choice passages from his three books.

Antagonistic as Fielding and Richardson were, there are many points of resemblance in their work and development. They both wrote three novels; the first in both cases is immature, and was inspired by another book; the second in both cases is the masterpiece; and the third in both cases marks a decline, but is better than the first. It has been unkindly said of Richardson that he was familiar with the workings of the female heart because he was something of an old woman

himself. His sensitive and timid nature shrank from the coarseness of the men of his day. He preferred female society, and surrounded himself, especially in his old age, with a Chorus of Rapturous Maidens. His knowledge of women is profound, but he attained it by patient research rather than by flashes of inspiration. To the present age he is unendurably prolix, but his good qualities and his wide influence are undeniable. The idea of writing a novel in the form of a series of letters became very popular; Smollett's masterpiece, *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker* (1771), and Miss Burney's *Evelina* (1778) are good examples. Richardson has been more appreciated in Germany and France than in Britain, partly

because his psychology is good and his description of English manners not so good, so that a foreigner would see his strong points and be unaware of his weak ones. His influence is to be seen in the work of such men as Lessing, Schiller, Rousseau, and Voltaire, and is even more conspicuous in the stories of the greatest of all French novelists. Balzac, in his passion for minutiae and in his elaborate dissection of the human heart, shows himself clearly to be a disciple of Richardson.

[A. Dobson, *Samuel Richardson* (English Men of Letters Series); *Eighteenth Century Vignettes* (Second Series); C. L. Thomson, *Samuel Richardson: a Biographical and Critical Study*.]

From "Clarissa"

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Mr. Belford to Robert Lovelace, Esq.

Thursday Night.

I may as well try to write; since, were I to go to bed, I shall not sleep. I never had such a weight of grief upon my mind in my life, as upon the demise of this admirable woman; whose soul is now rejoicing in the regions of light.

You may be glad to know the particulars of her happy exit. I will try to proceed; for all is hush and still; the family retired; but not one of them, and least of all her poor cousin, I dare say, to rest.

At four o'clock, as I mentioned in my last, I was sent for down; and, as thou usedst to like my descriptions, I will give thee the woeful scene that presented itself to me, as I approached the bed.

The Colonel was the first that took my attention, kneeling on the side of the bed, the lady's right hand in both his, which his face covered, bathing it with his tears; although she had been comforting him, as the women since told me, in elevated strains, but broken accents.

On the other side of the bed sat the good widow; her face overwhelmed with tears, leaning her head against the bed's head in a most

disconsolate manner; and turning her face to me, as soon as she saw me, O Mr. Belford, cried she, with folded hands—the dear lady—A heavy sob permitted her not to say more.

Mrs. Smith, with clasped fingers, and uplifted eyes, as if imploring help from the only Power which could give it, was kneeling down at the bed's feet, tears in large drops trickling down her cheeks.

Her nurse was kneeling between the widow and Mrs. Smith, her arms extended. In one hand she held an effectual cordial, which she had just been offering to her dying mistress; her face was swollen with weeping (though used to such scenes as this) and she turned her eyes towards me, as if she called upon me by them to join in the helpless sorrow; a fresh stream bursting from them as I approached the bed.

The maid of the house with her face upon her folded arms, as she stood leaning against the wainscot, more audibly expressed her grief than any of the others.

The lady had been silent a few minutes, and speechless, as they thought, moving her lips without uttering a word; one hand, as I said, in her cousin's. But when Mrs. Lovick on my approach pronounced my name, O Mr. Belford, said she, with a faint inward voice, but very distinct nevertheless—Now! Now!—(in broken periods she spoke) I bless God for his mercies to his poor creature—all will soon be over—a few—a very few moments—will end this strife—and I shall be happy!

Comfort her, Sir—turning her head to the Colonel—comfort my cousin—see! the blame—able kindness—he would not wish me to be happy—so soon!

Here she stopped for two or three minutes, earnestly looking upon him. Then resuming, My Dearest Cousin, said she, be comforted—what is dying but the common lot? The mortal frame may seem to labour—but that is all!—It is not so hard to die as I believed it to be!—the preparation is the difficulty, I bless God, I have had time for that—the rest is worse to beholders than to me!—I am all blessed hope—hope itself. She looked what she said, a sweet smile beaming over her countenance.

After a short silence, Once more, my dear Cousin, said she, but still in broken accents, commend me most dutifully to my father and mother—There she stopped. And then proceeding, To my sister, to my brother, to my uncles,—and tell them I bless them with my parting breath,—for all their goodness to me—even for their displeasure, I bless them—most happy has been to me my punishment *here!* Happy indeed!

She was silent for a few moments, lifting up her eyes, and the hand her cousin held not between his. Then, *O Death*, said she, *where is thy sting?* (the words I remember to have heard in the burial-service read over my uncle and poor Belton). And after a pause—*It is good for me that I was afflicted!* Words of scripture, I suppose.

Then turning towards us, who were lost in speechless sorrow, O dear, *dear* gentlemen, said she, you know not what *foretastes*—what *assurances*—And there she again stopped, and looked up, as if in a thankful rapture, sweetly smiling.

Then turning her head towards me—Do *you*, Sir, tell your friend that I forgive him!—and I pray to God to forgive him—Again pausing, and lifting up her eyes, as if praying that He would. Let him know how happily I die; And that such as my own—I wish to be his last hour.

She was again silent for a few moments: and then resuming—My sight fails me!—Your voices only—(for we both applauded her christian, her divine frame, though in accents as broken as her own); and the voice of grief is alike in all. Is not this Mr. Morden's hand? pressing one of his with that he had just let go. Which is Mr. Belford's? holding out the other. I gave her mine. God Almighty bless you both, said she, and make you both—in your last hour—for you *must* come to this—happy as I am.

She paused again, her breath growing shorter; and, after a few moments—And now, my dearest Cousin, give me your hand—nearer—still nearer—drawing it towards her; and she pressed it with her dying lips—God protect you, dear, dear Sir—and once more, receive my best and most grateful thanks—and tell my dear Miss Howe—and vouchsafe to see, and to tell my worthy Norton—she will be one day, I fear not, though now lowly in her fortunes, a saint in Heaven—tell them both, that I remember them with thankful blessings in my last moments!—And pray God to give them happiness *here* for many, many years, for the sake of their friends and lovers; and an heavenly crown *hereafter*; and such assurances of it, as I have, through the all-satisfying merits of my blessed Redeemer.

Her sweet voice and broken periods methinks still fill my ears, and never will be out of my memory.

After a short silence, in a more broken and faint accent—And you, Mr. Belford, pressing my hand, may God preserve you, and make you sensible of all your errors—you see, in me, how all ends—and may you be—And down sunk her head upon her pillow, she fainting away, and drawing from us her hands.

We thought she was then gone; and each gave way to a violent burst of grief.

But soon showing signs of returning life, our attention was again engaged; and I besought her, when a little recovered, to complete in my favour her half-pronounced blessing. She waved her hand to us both, and bowed her head six several times, as we have since recollected, as if distinguishing every person present; not forgetting the nurse and the maid-servant; the latter having approached the bed, weeping, as if

crowding in for the divine lady's last blessing; and she spoke faltering and inwardly—Bless—bless—bless—you all—and—now—and now—(holding up her almost lifeless hands for the last time)—come—O come—blessed Lord—Jesus!

And with these words, the last but half-pronounced, expired:—such a smile, such a charming serenity over-spreading her sweet face, at the instant, as seemed to manifest her eternal happiness already begun.

O Lovelace! But I can write no more!

I resume my pen to add a few lines.

While warm, though pulseless, we pressed each her hand with our lips; and then retired into the next room.

We looked at each other, with intent to speak; but, as if one motion governed, as one cause affected both, we turned away silent.

The Colonel sighed as if his heart would burst; at last, his face and hands uplifted, his back towards me, Good Heaven! said he to himself, support me!—And is it thus, O flower of nature!—Then pausing—And must we no more—never more—My blessed, blessed Cousin!—uttering some other words which his sighs made inarticulate.—And then, as if recollecting himself—Forgive me, Sir!—Excuse me, Mr. Belford! and sliding by me, Anon I hope to see you, Sir—And down stairs he went, and out of the house, leaving me a statue.

When I recovered, I was ready to repine at what I then called an unequal dispensation; forgetting her happy preparation, and still happier departure; and that she had but drawn a common lot, triumphing in it, and leaving behind her every one less assured of happiness, though equally certain that the lot would one day be their own.

She departed exactly at forty minutes after six o'clock, as by her watch on the table.

And thus died Miss Clarissa Harlowe, in the blossom of her youth and beauty; and who, her tender years considered, has not left behind her her superior in extensive knowledge and watchful prudence; nor hardly her equal for unblemished virtue, exemplary piety, sweetness of manners, discreet generosity, and true christian charity; and these all set off by the most graceful modesty and humility; yet on all proper occasions, manifesting a noble presence of mind, and true magnanimity; so that she may be said to have been not only an ornament to her sex, but to human nature.

A better pen than mine, may do her fuller justice. Thine, I mean, O Lovelace! For well dost thou know how much she excelled in the graces both of mind and person, natural and acquired, all that is woman. And thou also canst best account for the causes of her immature death, through these calamities which in so short a space of time, from the highest pitch of felicity, (every one in a manner adoring her) brought

her to an exit so happy for herself, but, that it was so *early*, so much to be deplored by all who had the honour of her acquaintance.

This task, then, I leave to thee: but now I can write no more, only that I am a sympathiser in every part of thy distress, except (and yet it is cruel to say it) in that which arises from thy guilt.

One o'clock Friday morning.

HENRY FIELDING

(1707 - 1754)

HENRY FIELDING was born at Sharpham Park, near Glastonbury, in Somerset, on the 22nd April, 1707. His father was Edmund Fielding, afterwards a major-general, who belonged to a younger branch of the family of the Earl of Denbigh. He was educated at Eton, where he remained possibly until 1725. In that year he had a precocious love-affair with Miss Sarah Andrew of Lyme Regis; this lady married a Mr. Rhodes in the following year, and Fielding soothed his wounded feelings by translating parts of the Sixth Satire of Juvenal ("The Legend of Bad Women"). Fielding began his literary career by writing a large number of farces, comedies, and burlesques. This work he frankly regarded as hackwork, and while almost all his plays have good passages in them, none are of great importance in comparison with his novels. His first comedy, *Love in Several Masques*, was produced at Drury Lane on the 12th February, 1728. Fielding then went to the University of Leyden, where he was admitted on the 16th March, 1728, and where he remained until about February, 1730. In 1730 one of his most successful bur-

lesques, *Tom Thumb*, was produced at the Haymarket. A revised and enlarged version of it was brought out the next year, under the name of *The Tragedy of Tragedies*. It made Swift laugh, though he is said to have laughed only twice in his life. Fielding based several of his plays on Molière—*The Mock Doctor* (1732) on *Le Médecin malgré lui* and *The Miser* on *L'Avare*. In 1734 he produced *Don Quixote in England* at the Haymarket—a work unimportant in itself, but showing Fielding's keen appreciation of Cervantes. On 28th November, 1734, he married Miss Charlotte Cradock of Salisbury, who was the original of Sophia Western in *Tom Jones* and of the heroine of *Amelia*. For a time he seems to have lived beyond his means as a country squire at East Stour, in Dorsetshire, though the serving-men in yellow liveries with which legend has embellished his establishment were probably as insubstantial as Falstaff's men in buckram. He soon returned to his business of playwright. *Pasquin* (1736) and *The Historical Register of the Year 1736* (1737) were two most successful burlesques which turned the ministry into

ridicule. So successful were these pieces that the ministry hastened to pass a Licensing Act which effectually muzzled Fielding and virtually ended his career as dramatist. He entered the Middle Temple on 1st November, 1737, and was called to the Bar in June, 1740. We can infer that he was a diligent student of law and was determined to succeed in his profession.

In 1740 Samuel Richardson published his novel *Pamela*. Fielding saw that it would be amusing to burlesque this novel by writing in a similar manner about a hero instead of about a heroine, and so upset Richardson's prudential system of morality with a *reductio ad absurdum*. It is possible that Fielding may have got a hint for the idea of his virtuous male from Aristophanes' *Plutus*, line 1091. Fielding collaborated with Rev. William Young, the original of Parson Adams, in translating the *Plutus* (published June, 1742). At any rate *The History of the Adventures of Mr. Joseph Andrews, and of his friend Mr. Abraham Adams* appeared in February, 1742. It ran far beyond its original design of being a burlesque, and became a novel of life and manners. Some of its characters, Mrs. Slip-slop, Parson Trulliber, and above all Parson Adams, are among the greatest characters in fiction. Joseph Andrews (who was named after the Biblical Joseph) and Fanny get pushed into the background to make way for characters of less importance to the plot. In *Joseph Andrews* Fielding was still feeling his way as a novelist, but it has an inimitable freshness and charm.

In 1743 Fielding published three volumes of *Miscellanies*. These

contained the Lucianic *Journey from this World to the Next* and the much more memorable *History of the Life of the Late Mr. Jonathan Wild the Great*. The latter was probably written before *Joseph Andrews*; it ironically celebrates the deeds of an arch-rogue who had been hanged at Tyburn eighteen years previously. It is perhaps the greatest piece of sustained irony in English literature, greater because more sustained than any of Swift's essays in irony, except *A Tale of a Tub*. It has always been caviare to the general, as irony in large doses does not entertain the majority of mankind. Fielding's wife died in 1743, and he married in 1747 one Mary Daniel, reputed to have been his first wife's maid. She made him a good wife. In 1748 he was appointed Justice of the Peace for the County of Middlesex and for the City and Liberty of Westminster.

Fielding's career up to this point had fitted him to become a great novelist. He had lived a full life, and had seen the world from many different angles. He had been educated abroad, he had a practised pen, owing to his more or less ephemeral efforts as playwright and journalist, he had lived as a country squire, and he had become a lawyer. Also he had made himself familiar with the ancient and modern classics, and he admired what was best among them, Aristophanes, Lucian, Shakespeare, Molière, Cervantes, and Le Sage. In 1749 (28th February) he produced his masterpiece, *Tom Jones*. To praise this, "the labour of some years" as he called it, is superfluous. Coleridge said that it had one of the three best plots in the

world; and Byron called its author "the prose Homer of human nature". It is, indeed, a vast sort of comic prose epic, varied as life itself is varied. The introductory chapters in particular are models of good style and good sense. One half of Gibbon's pontifical prophecy came true in 1918. After speaking of the (supposed) connexion between the Earls of Denbigh and the Hapsburgs, he says: "The successors of Charles V may disdain their brethren of England; but the romance of *Tom Jones*, that exquisite picture of human manners, will outlive the palace of the Escorial, and the Imperial Eagle of the house of Austria."

The third and last of the three great novels, *Amelia*, was published in December, 1751. It was written as a tribute to the memory of his first wife. It has a mellowness that is all its own, but is hardly as good as *Tom Jones*. Even the mind of such a man as Fielding could only yield one such harvest. *Amelia*, however, is extremely good, and would probably be rated higher were it not overshadowed by its greater predecessor. Fielding did not write much more, save a few pamphlets mostly on economic or legal subjects. In one of them he defended the notorious Elizabeth Canning. He was an ideal magistrate, administered the law with justice and mercy, and broke up a formidable gang of thieves. In discharging his poorly-remunerated duties he never spared himself. He had long been a victim to gout, and his health began gradually to break up. In June, 1754, he left England and went to Lisbon to try to recover his health, but he did not succeed in so doing, and died

8th October, 1754. He was buried in the English cemetery at Lisbon, where a tomb was erected in 1830. *The Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon* was posthumously published. It is a charming account of his last voyage, where we can see the indomitable pluck of the man who was dying when he left England, and who was always courteous and considerate of others.

Henry Fielding is not only witty in himself, but "the cause that wit is in other men". His novels have been used as models by almost all the most distinguished of his successors. No one, however, has beaten him at his own game, although those who have loved him most have been most successful as novelists. In many respects he stands nearest to Shakespeare among English authors. Shakespeare, however, was not of an age, but for all time, while Fielding is more limited in his scope. Fielding is a typical Englishman; he is English as good ale and roast-beef and fox-hunting are English. But in his breadth of view, in his kindly tolerance, and in his unflinching sympathy for human frailty he is Shakespearean. His novels have had a healthy influence on all subsequent fiction. His broad open-air humour is the surest of cures for an overdose of the gloomy treatises on economics and disease which have recently masqueraded as novels.

[Austin Dobson, *Fielding* (English Men of Letters Series); G. M. Godden, *Henry Fielding: a Memoir*; W. L. Cross, *The History of Henry Fielding*; F. T. Blanchard, *The Novels of Fielding*; W. M. Thackeray, *The English Humorists of the Eighteenth Century*.]

From "A Journey from this World to the Next"

I then observed Shakespeare standing between Betterton and Booth, and deciding a difference between those two great actors concerning the placing of an accent in one of his lines: this was disputed on both sides with a warmth which surprised me in Elysium, till I discovered by intuition that every soul retained its principal characteristic, being, indeed, its very essence. The line was that celebrated one in Othello—

Put out the light, and then put out the light,

according to Betterton. Mr. Booth contended to have it thus:—

Put out the light, and then put out THE light.

I could not help offering my conjecture on this occasion, and suggested it might perhaps be—

Put out the light, and then put out THY light.

Another hinted a reading very sophisticated in my opinion—

Put out the light, and then put out THREE, light,

making light to be the vocative case. Another would have altered the last word, and read—

Put out thy light, and then put out thy sight.

But Betterton said, if the text was to be disturbed, he saw no reason why a word might not be changed as well as a letter, and, instead of "put out thy light", you may read "put out thy eyes". At last it was agreed on all sides to refer the matter to the decision of Shakespeare himself, who delivered his sentiments as follows: "Faith, gentlemen, it is so long since I wrote the line, I have forgot my meaning. This I know, could I have dreamt so much nonsense would have been talked and writt about it, I would have blotted it out of my works; for I am sure, if any of these be my meaning, it doth me very little honour."

He was then interrogated concerning some other ambiguous passages in his works; but he declined any satisfactory answer, saying, if Mr. Theobald had not written about it sufficiently, there were three or four more new editions of his plays coming out, which he hoped would satisfy every one, concluding: "I marvel nothing so much as that men will gird themselves at discovering obscure beauties in an author. Certes the greatest and most pregnant beauties are ever the plainest and most evidently striking; and when two meanings of a passage can in the least balance our judgments which to prefer, I hold it matter of unquestionable certainty that neither of them is worth a farthing."

(From *Chapter VIII.*)

From "Joseph Andrews"

BOOK II, CHAPTER XIV

AN INTERVIEW BETWEEN PARSON ADAMS AND PARSON TRULLIBER

Parson Adams came to the house of parson Trulliber, whom he found stripped into his waistcoat, with an apron on, and a pail in his hand, just come from serving his hogs; for Mr. Trulliber was a parson on Sundays, but all the other six days might more properly be called a farmer. He occupied a small piece of land of his own, besides which he rented a considerable deal more. His wife milked his cows, managed his dairy, and followed the markets with butter and eggs. The hogs fell chiefly to his care, which he carefully waited on at home, and attended to fairs; on which occasions he was liable to many jokes, his own size being with much ale rendered little inferior to that of the beasts he sold. He was indeed one of the largest men you should see, and could have acted the part of Sir John Falstaff without stuffing. Add to this that the roundity of his belly was considerably increased by the shortness of his stature, his shadow ascending very near as far in height when he lay on his back, as when he stood on his legs. His voice was loud and hoarse, and his accent extremely broad. To complete the whole, he had a stateliness in his gait, when he walked, not unlike that of a goose, only he stalked slower.

Mr. Trulliber being informed that somebody wanted to speak to him, immediately slipped off his apron, and clothed himself in an old night-gown, being the dress in which he always saw his company at home. His wife, who informed him of Mr. Adams's arrival, had made a small mistake; for she had told her husband, "She believed here was a man come for some of his hogs." This supposition made Mr. Trulliber hasten with the utmost expedition to attend his guest. He no sooner saw Adams, than, not in the least doubting the cause of his errand to be what his wife had imagined, he told him, "he was come in very good time; that he expected a dealer that very afternoon;" and added, "they were all pure and fat, and upwards of twenty score apiece." Adams answered, "He believed he did not know him."—"Yes, yes," cried Trulliber, "I have seen you often at fair; why we have dealt before now, mun, I warrant you. Yes, yes," cries he, "I remember thy face very well, but won't mention a word till you have seen them, though I have never sold thee a flitch of such bacon as is now in the sty." Upon which he laid violent hands on Adams, and dragged him into the hog-sty, which was indeed but two steps from his parlour-window. They were no sooner arrived there, than he cried out, "Do but handle them; step in, friend; art welcome to handle them, whether dost buy or not." At which words,

opening the gate, he pushed Adams into a pig-sty, insisting on it that he should handle them before he would talk one word with him.

Adams, whose natural complacency was beyond any artificial, was obliged to comply before he was suffered to explain himself; and laying hold on one of their tails, the unruly beast gave such a sudden spring, that he threw poor Adams all along in the mire. Trulliber, instead of assisting him to get up, burst into a fit of laughter, and, entering the sty, said to Adams, with some contempt, "Why, dost not know how to handle a hog?" and was going to lay hold of one himself; but Adams, who thought he had carried his complacency far enough, was no sooner on his legs, than he escaped out of the reach of the animals, and cried out, "*Nil habeo cum porcis*: I am a clergyman, sir, and am not come to buy hogs." Trulliber answered, "he was sorry for the mistake; but that he must blame his wife;" adding, "she was a fool, and always committed blunders." He then desired him to walk in and clean himself; that he would only fasten up the sty, and follow him. Adams desired leave to dry his great-coat, wig, and hat, by the fire, which Trulliber granted. Mrs. Trulliber would have brought him a basin of water to wash his face; but her husband bid her be quiet like a fool as she was, or she would commit more blunders, and then directed Adams to the pump. While Adams was thus employed, Trulliber, conceiving no great respect for the appearance of his guest, fastened the parlour door, and now conducted him into the kitchen; telling him he believed a cup of drink would do him no harm, and whispered his wife to draw a little of the worst ale. After a short silence, Adams said, "I fancy, sir, you already perceive me to be a clergyman."—"Ay, ay," cried Trulliber, grinning, "I perceive you have some cassock; I will not venture to caale it a whole one." Adams answered, "It was indeed none of the best; but he had the misfortune to tear it about ten years ago in passing over a stile." Mrs. Trulliber, returning with the drink, told her husband, "She fancied the gentleman was a traveller, and that he would be glad to eat a bit." Trulliber bid her hold her impertinent tongue; and asked her, "If parsons used to travel without horses?" adding, "He supposed the gentleman had none by his having no boots on."—"Yes, sir, yes," says Adams; "I have a horse, but I have left him behind me." "I am glad to hear you have one," says Trulliber, "for I assure you I don't love to see clergymen on foot; it is not seemly, nor suiting the dignity of the cloth." Here Trulliber made a long oration on the dignity of the cloth (or rather gown), not much worth relating, till his wife had spread the table, and set a mess of porridge on it for his breakfast. He then said to Adams, "I don't know, friend, how you came to caale on me; however, as you are here, if you think proper to eat a morsel, you may." Adams accepted the invitation, and the two parsons sat down together; Mrs. Trulliber waiting behind her husband's chair, as was, it seems,

her custom. Trulliber ate heartily, but scarce put anything in his mouth without finding fault with his wife's cookery; all which the poor woman bore patiently. Indeed, she was so absolute an admirer of her husband's greatness and importance, of which she had frequent hints from his own mouth, that she almost carried her adoration to an opinion of his infallibility. To say the truth, the parson had exercised her more ways than one; and the pious woman had so well edified by her husband's sermons, that she had resolved to receive the bad things of this world together with the good. She had indeed been at first a little contentious; but he had long since got the better; partly by her love for this, partly by her fear of that; partly by her religion; partly by the respect he paid himself, and partly by that which he received from the parish. She had, in short, absolutely submitted, and now worshipped her husband, as Sarah did Abraham, calling him (not lord, but) master. Whilst they were at table her husband gave her a fresh example of his greatness; for as she had just delivered a cup of ale to Adams, he snatched it out of his hand, and crying out, "I caal'd vurst," swallowed down the ale. Adams denied it; it was referred to the wife, who, though her conscience was on the side of Adams, durst not give it against her husband. Upon which he said, "No, sir, no; I should not have been so rude to have taken it from you, if you had caal'd vurst; but I'd have you know I'm a better man than to suffer the best he in the kingdom to drink before me in my own house, when I caale vurst."

As soon as their breakfast was ended, Adams began in the following manner: "I think, sir, it is high time to inform you of the business of my embassy. I am a traveller, and am passing this way in company with two young people, a lad and a damsel, my parishioners, towards my own cure; we stopped at a house of hospitality in the parish, where they directed me to you, as having the cure."—"Though I am but a curate," says Trulliber, "I believe I am as warm as the vicar himself, or perhaps the rector of the next parish too; I believe I could buy them both."—"Sir," cries Adams, "I rejoice thereat. Now sir, my business is, that we are by various accidents stripped of our money, and are not able to pay our reckoning, being seven shillings. I therefore request you to assist me with the loan of those seven shillings, and also seven shillings more which, peradventure, I shall return to you: but if not, I am convinced you will joyfully embrace such an opportunity of laying up a treasure in a better place than any this world affords."

Suppose a stranger, who entered the chambers of a lawyer, being imagined a client, when the lawyer was preparing his palm for the fee, should pull out a writ against him. Suppose an apothecary, at the door of a chariot containing some greater doctor of eminent skill, should, instead of directions to a patient, present him with a potion for himself. Suppose a minister should, instead of a good round sum, treat my

Lord —, or Sir —, or Esquire —, with a good broomstick. Suppose a civil companion, or a led captain should, instead of virtue, and beauty, and parts, and admiration, thunder vice, and infamy, and ugliness, and folly, and contempt, in his patron's ears. Suppose when a tradesman first carries in his bill, the man of fashion should pay it; or suppose, if he did so, the tradesman should abate what he had overcharged on the supposition of waiting. In short,—suppose what you will, you never can nor will suppose anything equal to the astonishment which seized on Trulliber, as soon as Adams had ended his speech. Awhile he rolled his eyes in silence; sometimes surveying Adams, then his wife; then casting them on the ground, then lifting them up to heaven. At last he burst forth in the following accents: "Sir, I believe I know where to lay up my little treasure as well as another. I thank God, if I am not so warm as some, I am content: that is a blessing greater than riches; and he to whom that is given, need ask no more. To be content with a little, is greater than to possess the world; which a man may possess without being so. Lay up my treasure! what matters where a man's treasure is, whose heart is in the Scriptures? there is the treasure of a Christian." At these words the water ran from Adams's eyes; and catching Trulliber by the hand in a rapture, "Brother," says he, "heaven bless the accident by which I came to see you! I would have walked many a mile to have communed with you; and believe me, I will shortly pay you a second visit; but my friends, I fancy, by this time, wonder at my stay; so let me have the money immediately." Trulliber then put on a stern look, and cried out, "Thou dost not intend to rob me?" At which the wife, bursting into tears, fell on her knees, and roared out, "Oh dear, sir! for heaven's sake don't rob my master: we are but poor people."—"Get up for a fool as thou art, and go about thy business," said Trulliber: "dost think the man will venture his life? he is a beggar, and no robber."—"Very true, indeed," answered Adams. "I wish, with all my heart, the tithing-man was here," cries Trulliber: "I would have thee punished as a vagabond for thy impudence. Fourteen shillings, indeed! I won't give thee a farthing. I believe thou art no more a clergyman than the woman there" (pointing to his wife); "but if thou art, dost deserve to have thy gown stripped over thy shoulders, for running about the country in such a manner."—"I forgive your suspicions," says Adams, "but suppose I am not a clergyman, I am nevertheless thy brother: and thou, as a Christian, much more as a clergyman, art obliged to relieve my distress."—"Dost preach to me?" replied Trulliber: "dost pretend to instruct me in my duty?"—"Ifacks, a good story," cries Mrs. Trulliber, "to preach to my master!"—"Silence, woman," cries Trulliber. "I would have thee know, friend" (addressing himself to Adams), "I shall not learn my duty from such as thee. I know what charity is, better than to give to vagabonds."—"Besides,

if we were inclined, the poor's rate obliges us to give so much charity," cries the wife.—"Pugh! thou art a fool. Poor's rate! Hold thy nonsense," answered Trulliber; and then turning to Adams, he told him, "He would give him nothing."—"I am sorry," answered Adams, "that you do not know what charity is, since you practise it no better: but I must tell you, if you trust to your knowledge for your justification, you will find yourself deceived, though you should add faith to it, without good works."—"Fellow," cries Trulliber, "dost thou speak against faith in my house? Get out of my doors: I will no longer remain under the same roof with a wretch who speaks wantonly of faith and the Scriptures."—"Name not the Scriptures," says Adams.—"How! not name the Scriptures! Do you disbelieve the Scriptures?" cries Trulliber. "No; but you do," answered Adams, "if I may reason from your practice; for their commands are so explicit, and their rewards and punishments so immense, that it is impossible a man should steadfastly believe, without obeying. Now there is no command more express, no duty more frequently enjoined, than charity. Whoever, therefore, is void of charity, I make no scruple of pronouncing he is no Christian."—"I would not advise thee," says Trulliber, "to say that I am no Christian: I won't take it of you; for I believe I am as good a man as thyself;" (and indeed, though he was now rather too corpulent for athletic exercises, he had, in his youth, been one of the best boxers and cudgel-players in the county). His wife, seeing him clench his fist, interposed, and begged him not to fight, but show himself a true Christian, and take the law of him. As nothing could provoke Adams to strike, but an absolute assault on himself or his friend, he smiled at the angry look and gestures of Trulliber; and telling him, he was sorry to see such men in orders, departed without farther ceremony.

From "Tom Jones"

BOOK V, CHAPTER I

Of the SERIOUS in writing, and for what purpose it is introduced

Peradventure there may be no parts in this prodigious work which will give the reader less pleasure in the perusing than those which have given the author the greatest pain in composing. Among these, probably, may be reckoned those initial essays, which we have prefixed to the historical matter contained in every book; and which we have determined to be essentially necessary to this kind of writing, of which we have set ourselves at the head.

For this our determination we do not hold ourselves strictly bound to assign any reason; it being abundantly sufficient that we have laid

it down as a rule necessary to be observed in all the prosai-comi-epic writings. Whoever demanded the reasons of that nice unity of time or place which is now established to be so essential to dramatic poetry? What critic hath ever been asked, why a play may not contain two days as well as one; or why the audience (provided they travel like electors, without any expense) may not be wafted fifty miles as well as five? Hath any commentator well accounted for the limitation which an ancient critic hath set to the drama, which he will have contain neither more nor less than five acts? Or hath any one living attempted to explain what the modern judges of our theatres mean by that word *low*; by which they have happily succeeded in banishing all humour from the stage, and have made the theatre as dull as a drawing-room? Upon all these occasions the world seems to have embraced a maxim of our law, viz. *cuicumque in arte suâ perito credendum est*: for it seems, perhaps, difficult to conceive, that any one should have had enough of impudence to lay down dogmatical rules in any art or science without the least foundation. In such cases, therefore, we are apt to conclude, there are sound and good reasons at the bottom, though we are unfortunately not able to see so far.

Now, in reality, the world have paid too great a compliment to critics, and have imagined them men of much greater profundity than they really are. From this complaisance, the critics have been emboldened to assume a dictatorial power, and have so far succeeded, that they have now become the masters, and have the assurance to give laws to those authors, from whose predecessors they originally received them.

The critic, rightly considered, is no more than the clerk, whose office it is to transcribe the rules and laws laid down by those great judges, whose vast strength of genius hath placed them in the light of legislators, in the several sciences over which they presided. This office was all which the critics of old aspired to; nor did they ever dare to advance a sentence, without supporting it by the authority of the judge from whence it was borrowed.

But, in process of time, and in ages of ignorance, the clerk began to invade the power and assume the dignity of his master. The laws of writing were no longer founded on the practice of the author, but on the dictates of the critic. The clerk became the legislator; and those very peremptorily gave laws, whose business it was, at first, only to transcribe them.

Hence arose an obvious, and, perhaps, an unavoidable error; for these critics, being men of shallow capacities, very easily mistook mere form for substance. They acted as a judge would, who should adhere to the lifeless letter of law, and reject the spirit. Little circumstances, which were, perhaps, accidental in a great author, were by these critics considered to constitute his chief merit, and transmitted as essentials

to be observed by all his successors. To these encroachments, time and ignorance, the two great supporters of imposture, gave authority; and thus many rules for good writing have been established, which have not the least foundation in truth or nature; and which commonly serve for no other purpose than to curb and restrain genius, in the same manner as it would have restrained the dancing-master, had the many excellent treatises on that art laid it down as an essential rule that every man must dance in chains.

To avoid, therefore, all imputation of laying down a rule for posterity, founded only on the authority of *ipse dixit*,—for which, to say the truth, we have not the profoundest veneration—we shall here waive the privilege above contended for, and proceed to lay before the reader the reasons which have induced us to intersperse these several digressive essays in the course of this work.

And here we shall, of necessity, be led to open a new vein of knowledge, which, if it hath been discovered, hath not, to our remembrance, been wrought on by any ancient or modern writer. This vein is no other than that of contrast, which runs through all the works of the creation, and may probably have a larger share in constituting to us the idea of all beauty, as well natural as artificial: for what demonstrates the beauty and excellence of anything but its reverse? Thus the beauty of day, and that of summer, is set off by the horrors of night and winter. And I believe, if it was possible for a man to have seen only the two former, he would have a very imperfect idea of their beauty.

But to avoid too serious an air; can it be doubted but that the finest woman in the world would lose all benefit of her charms in the eye of a man who had never seen one of another cast? The ladies themselves seem so sensible of this, that they are all industrious to procure foils; nay, they will become foils to themselves: for I have observed (at Bath particularly), that they endeavour to appear as ugly as possible in the morning, in order to set off that beauty which they intend to show you in the evening.

Most artists have this secret in practice, though some perhaps, have not much studied the theory. The jeweller knows that the finest brilliant requires a foil; and the painter, by the contrast of his figures, often acquires great applause.

A great genius among us will illustrate this matter fully. I cannot, indeed, range him under any general head of common artists, as he hath a title to be placed among those

Inventas qui vitam excoluere per artes.

Who by invented arts have life improved.

I mean here, the inventor of that most exquisite entertainment called the English pantomime.

This entertainment consists of two parts, which the inventor distinguished by the name of the serious and the comic. The serious exhibited a certain number of heathen gods and heroes, who were certainly the worst and dullest company into which an audience was ever introduced; and (which was a secret known to few) were actually intended so to be, in order to contrast the comic part of the entertainment, and to display the tricks of harlequin to the better advantage.

This was, perhaps, no very civil use of such personages; but the contrivance was, nevertheless, ingenious enough, and had its effect. And this will now plainly appear, if, instead of serious and comic, we supply the words duller and dullest; for the comic was certainly duller than anything before shown on the stage, and could be set off only by that superlative degree of dullness which composed the serious. So intolerably serious, indeed, were these gods and heroes, that harlequin (though the English gentleman of that name is not at all related to the French family, for he is of a much more serious disposition) was always welcome on the stage, as he relieved the audience from worse company.

Judicious writers have always practised this art of contrast with great success. I have been surprised that Horace should cavil at this art in Homer; but, indeed, he contradicts himself in the very next line:

*Indignor quandoque bonus dormitat Homerus,
Verum opere in longo fas est obrepere somnum.*

I grieve if e'er great Homer chance to sleep;
Yet slumbers on long works have right to creep.

For we are not here to understand, as, perhaps, some have, that an author actually falls asleep while he is writing. It is true that readers are too apt to be so overtaken; but, if the work was as long as any of Oldmixon, the author himself is too well entertained to be subject to the least drowsiness. He is, as Mr. Pope observes,

Sleepless himself to give his readers sleep.

To say the truth, these soporific parts are so many scenes of serious artfully interwoven, in order to contrast and set off the rest; and this is the true meaning of a late facetious writer, who told the public, that whenever he was dull they might be assured there was a design in it.

In this light, then, or rather in this darkness, I would have the reader to consider these initial essays. And, after this warning, if he shall be of opinion that he can find enough of serious in other parts of this history, he may pass over these, in which we profess to be laboriously dull, and begin the following books at the second chapter.

TOBIAS GEORGE SMOLLETT

(1721 - 1771)

TOBIAS GEORGE SMOLLETT was born near Bonhill, Dumbartonshire, in 1721. He came of a family which had long been influential in Dumbartonshire; his grandfather, Sir James, was laird of Bonhill, and had been knighted by William III in 1698. His father, a younger son who had married imprudently, died when the future novelist was two years of age. Smollett was educated at Dumbarton School, and proceeded thence to Glasgow University in 1736, being at the same time apprenticed to Dr. John Gordon, a well-known surgeon. At the age of eighteen he wrote a tragedy entitled *The Regicide*, which was based upon Buchanan's account of the death of James I of Scotland. The ill-success of this tragedy, though fully deserved, did much towards permanently embittering Smollett. In 1739 he proceeded to London, tragedy and all, and failed to interest Lyttelton, Fielding's patron, in his work. He avenged himself eight years later in characteristic fashion by writing his heartless *Burlesque Ode on the Death of a Grandmother* to parody Lyttelton's *Monody* to the memory of his wife. In despair of attaining literary success, Smollett secured the post of surgeon's mate on board H.M.S. *Cumberland*, and took part in the disastrous siege of Cartagena in 1741. When the fleet raised the siege and went to Jamaica, Smollett accompanied it, and there fell in love with the daughter of a planter, Nancy Lascelles, whom he married in 1747. He removed his name from

the navy books in 1744, and set up as a surgeon in Downing Street, but failed to secure a large practice.

In 1746 Smollett wrote the most famous of his poems, *The Tears of Scotland*, a lament for Culloden. His earliest publication, *Advice, a Satire*, which has some of Juvenal's repellent qualities without any of his power, appeared in the same year. Its sequel, *Reproof, a Satire*, appeared in 1747. In the next year, 1748, Smollett published his first great novel, *The Adventures of Roderick Random*. Fielding had published *Joseph Andrews* in 1742, and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu attributed *Roderick Random* to him. A French version which appeared in 1761 was described as "de l'anglais de M. Fielding". Like many first novels, *Roderick Random* is the freshest of its author's works. It is largely, though not wholly, autobiographical. It is especially excellent in its delineation of the British tar. The book owes something to Swift, Defoe, and Fielding, but very much more to Le Sage. The success of this work encouraged Smollett to publish his unfortunate tragedy in 1748, and to write another picaresque novel, *The Adventures of Peregrine Pickle*, published in 1751. Before writing *Peregrine Pickle* Smollett went to France with his future biographer, Dr. Moore (author of *Zeluco* and father of Sir John Moore of Corunna), in order to collect material. Amongst other specimens of oddity he collected Mark Akenside, to whom, as the original of the host

at the entertainment in the manner of the ancients, he has given an undesirable kind of immortality, at least as great as that conferred by Akenside's poems on their author. *Peregrine Pickle* is even more loosely constructed than its predecessor; it is full of cynical asperities and personalities (some of which were removed in the second edition), and it contains many interpolations, of which the most infamous is Chapter LXXXI, *Memoirs of a Lady of Quality*. These memoirs were a *chronique scandaleuse*, written by Fanny, Viscountess Vane (1713-1788), who paid Smollett handsomely to publish this account of her own shame, which is not even interesting. In spite, however, of its disadvantages, *Peregrine Pickle* is a great novel, and in the death scene of Commodore Trunnion, Smollett displays his talent at its very best.

Smollett did not yet despair of earning a living by medicine. He took the degree of M.D. at Marischal College, Aberdeen, in June, 1750, and attempted to set up a practice in Bath. In 1752 he published *An Essay on the External use of Water*, in which he endeavoured to prove (an action not unlike that of Dr. Stockmann in *An Enemy of the People*) that the mineral water of Bath had little advantage over ordinary water. After this he abandoned all hope of earning a livelihood by any means other than literature. His third novel, *The Adventures of Ferdinand Count Fathom*, appeared in 1753. It is a sordid and squalid book, revolting as a whole, but extremely powerful in parts. Some of its episodes are more romantic than anything else in Smollett, and

foreshadow the 'Tale of Terror.' The scene in the robbers' cottage in the forest has been often imitated but never excelled.

Smollett now commenced the arduous career of a universal provider of literature. He also was captain of a team of hackney-writers. He translated *Don Quixote* (1755), and was accused of having made an unfair use of Jervas's version. He edited *The Critical Review*; *The British Magazine* (1760); and *The Briton*, a weekly paper, price 2½d., which ran from May, 1762, to February, 1763, when it was put out of action by Wilkes's *The North Briton*. To *The British Magazine* he contributed a serial, *The Adventures of Sir Launcelot Greaves*, the least interesting of all his writings. It maladroitly transplants Don Quixote into eighteenth-century England. In 1758 Smollett published his *Complete History of England, from the descent of Julius Caesar to the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, 1748*, which he wrote at the rate of about a century a month. A continuation followed in five volumes (1762-1765). His *History* is readable, and no more inaccurate than was to be expected of work produced under such conditions. It remained for many years a standard book. He also compiled *A Compendium of Authentic and Entertaining Voyages* (1756) and *The Present State of all Nations* (1764), edited a translation of the works of Voltaire in twenty-five volumes (1761), and had some share in a translation of *Gil Blas*. In 1757 Garrick produced, at Drury Lane, Smollett's comedy *The Reprisal: or the Tars of Old England*, a piece of most ungracious fooling directed against

the French navy. All these works were undertaken frankly to make money, and none contains any of Smollett's characteristic touches, though all show signs of his literary ability and fluency.

In 1763 Elizabeth, Smollett's only child, died at the age of fifteen. Smollett was never the same man again. He went abroad with his wife for two years, staying most of the time at Nice, and in 1766 published his *Travels through France and Italy*, a book which displays Smollett's acerbity no less than his ability. He visited Scotland in 1766; in 1768 he published his political satire, *The History and Adventures of an Atom*, a powerful but coarse Rabelaisian work. In 1769 Smollett's health broke down completely, and he left England finally, and settled near Leghorn, where he died on 17th September, 1771. During the last year of his life he wrote the greatest of his novels, *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker* (1771). This is as easily Smollett's masterpiece as *Tom Jones* is Fielding's, and is in many ways the second greatest of eighteenth-century novels. The rough places of Smollett's nature have been made smooth, and his genius is at its best. Bramble, Mrs. Tabitha, and Lismahago are the best portraits in all his gallery. The novel is written in the epistolary form, but, as no answers to the letters are given, this form is not unwieldy as it tends sometimes to be. *Humphry Clinker* is a remarkable example of fresh and vigorous work produced at the close of an unhappy life.

It is impossible to avoid comparing Smollett with Fielding, to the disadvantage of the former.

Fielding was an observer of the characters of human life, Smollett a describer of its various eccentricities. Fielding excelled, especially in his masterpiece, at constructing plots; Smollett's novels owe what little unity they have to the fact that they deal with the adventures of one man, and, as Aristotle says (*Poetics*, VIII), "Unity of plot does not, as some persons think, consist in the unity of the hero". Above all, Fielding was a man of wise tolerance and sanity, while Smollett was imprudent, querulous, and prone to anger. But when all is said and done, Smollett is supremely great. His most noticeable feature is the prodigality of his wit; he sows humorous incidents with the whole sack. He is easier to imitate than his great contemporary, and has had many distinguished pupils, of whom the greatest is Dickens. His works have been ransacked for comic material from the time they first appeared until the present day. Some of his humour is somewhat elementary, and appeals most to those who

"find huge wealth in one pound one,
Vast wit in broken noses",

but much of it is mellow and profound, and has increased the gaiety of nations, as it is appreciated on the Continent as much as in Great Britain. Both in style and vocabulary Smollett is more modern than Fielding; and in two respects he seems to have been a pioneer of modern literary methods. He travelled to collect material, and he published a tale in serial form.

[R. Chambers, *Smollett: his Life and a Selection from his Writings*; D. Hannay, *Life of Tobias George*

Smollett; O. Smeaton, *Tobias Smollett*; L. Melville, *Life and Letters of Tobias Smollett*; H. S. Buck, *A Study in Smollett*. Smollett's *Letters* have been edited by E. S. Noyes.]

From "Roderick Random"

CHAPTER X

In the course of our conversation, which was interlarded with scraps of Latin, we understood that this facetious person was a schoolmaster, whose income being small, he was fain to keep a glass of good liquor for the entertainment of passengers, by which he made shift to make the two ends of the year meet. "I am this day," said he, "the happiest old fellow in his majesty's dominions. My wife, rest her soul, is in heaven. My daughter is to be married next week; but the two chief pleasures in my life are these (pointing to the bottle and a large edition of Horace that lay on the table)—I am old, 'tis true—what then? the more reason I should enjoy the small share of life that remains, as my friend Flaccus advises: *Tu ne quaesieris (scire nefas) quem mihi, quem tibi finem dii dederint. Carpe diem, quam minimum credula postero.*"

As he was very inquisitive about our affairs, we made no scruple of acquainting him with our situation, which, when he had learned, he enriched us with advices how to behave in the world, telling us that he was no stranger to the deceits of mankind. In the meantime, he ordered his daughter to lay a fowl to the fire for supper, for he was resolved this night to regale his friends—*permittens divis caetera*. While our entertainment was preparing, our host recounted the adventures of his own life, which, as they contained nothing remarkable, I forbear to rehearse. When we had fared sumptuously, and drank several bottles of his *quadrimum*, I expressed a desire of going to rest, which was with some difficulty complied with, after he had informed us that we should overtake the waggon by noon next day; and that there was room enough in it for half a dozen, for there were only four passengers as yet in that convenience.

Before my comrade and I fell asleep, we had some conversation about the good-humour of our landlord, which gave Strap such an idea of his benevolence, that he positively believed we should pay nothing for our lodging and entertainment. "Don't you observe," said he, "that he has conceived a particular affection for us—nay, even treated us at supper with extraordinary fare, which, to be sure, we should not of ourselves have called for?"

I was partly of Strap's opinion; but the experience I had of the world made me suspend my belief till the morning, when, getting up betimes, we breakfasted with our host and his daughter on hasty-pudding and

ale, and desired to know what we had to pay.—“Biddy will let you know, gentlemen,” said he, “for I never mind these matters. Money matters are beneath the concern of one who lives upon the Horatian plan—*Crescentem sequitur cura pecuniam*.” Meanwhile Biddy, having consulted a slate hung in the corner, told us, our reckoning come to 8s. 7d. “Eight shillings and sevenpence,” cried Strap, “’tis impossible! you must be mistaken, young woman.”—“Reckon again, child,” says her father, very deliberately; “perhaps you have miscounted.”—“No, indeed, father,” replied she, “I know my business better.” I could contain my indignation no longer, but said it was an unconscionable bill, and demanded to know the particulars; upon which the old man got up, muttering, “Ay, ay, let us see the particulars—that’s but reasonable.” And, taking pen, ink, and paper, wrote the following *items*:

To bread and beer	..	..	..	..	os. 6d.
To a fowl and sausages	..	..	..	..	2s. 6d.
To four bottles of <i>quadrim</i>.	..	..	..	..	2s. 0d.
To fire and tobacco	..	..	..	..	os. 7d.
To lodging	..	..	..	..	2s. 0d.
To breakfast	..	..	..	..	1s. 0d.
					<u>8s. 7d.</u>

As he had not the appearance of a common publican, and had raised a sort of veneration in me by his demeanour the preceding night, it was not in my power to upbraid him as he deserved; therefore I contented myself with saying, I was sure he did not learn to be an extortioner from Horace. He answered, I was but a young man, and did not know the world, or I would not tax him with extortion, whose only aim was to live *contentus parvo*, and keep off *importuna pauperies*. My fellow-traveller could not so easily put up with this imposition; but swore he should either take one-third of the money, or go without.

While we were engaged in this dispute, I perceived the daughter go out, and, conjecturing the occasion, immediately paid the exorbitant demand, which was no sooner done, than Biddy returned with two stout fellows, who came in on pretence of taking their morning draught; but in reality to frighten us into compliance. Just as we departed, Strap, who was half distracted on account of this piece of expense, went up to the schoolmaster, and, grinning in his face, pronounced, with great emphasis—“*Semper avarus eget*.” To which the pedant replied, with a malicious smile—“*Animum rege, qui, nisi paret, imperat*.”

From "Peregrine Pickle"

CHAPTER LXXIII

The Death of Commodore Truncheon

Though the commodore's speech was interrupted by a violent hic-cough, he still retained the use of his senses; and when Peregrine approached, stretched out his hand with manifest signs of satisfaction. The young gentleman, whose heart overflowed with gratitude and affection, could not behold such a spectacle unmoved. He endeavoured to conceal his tenderness, which, in the wildness of his youth, and in the pride of his disposition, he considered as a derogation from his manhood; but, in spite of all his endeavours, the tears gushed from his eyes, while he kissed the old man's hand; and he was so utterly disconcerted by his grief, that when he attempted to speak, his tongue denied its office; so that the commodore perceiving his disorder, made a last effort of strength, and consoled him in these words: "Swab the spray from your bowsprit, my good lad, and coil up your spirits. You must not let the toplifts of your heart give way because you see me ready to go down at these years; many a better man has foundered before he has made half my way; thof I trust, by the mercy of God, I shall be sure in port in a very few glasses, and fast moored in a most blessed riding: for my good friend Jolter hath overhauled the journal of my sins; and by the observation he hath taken of the state of my soul, I hope I shall happily conclude my voyage, and be brought up in a latitude of heaven. Here has been a doctor that wanted to stow me chock-full of physic; but when a man's hour is come, what signifies his taking his departure with a 'pothecary's shop in his hold? Those fellows come alongside of dying men, like the messengers of the Admiralty with sailing orders: but I told him as how I could slip my cable without his direction or assistance, and so he hauled off in dudgeon. This cursed hiccough makes such a rippling in the current of my speech, that mayhap you don't understand what I say. Now while the sucker of my wind-pump will go, I would willingly mention a few things, which I hope you will set down in the log-book of your remembrance, when I am stiff, d'ye see. There's your aunt sitting whimpering by the fire, I desire you will keep her tight, warm, and easy in her old age; she's an honest heart in her own way; and thof she goes a little crank and humorsome, by being often overstowed with Nantz and religion, she has been a faithful shipmate to me, and I dare say never turned in with another man, since we first embarked in the same bottom. Jack Hatchway, you know the trim of her as well as e'er a man in England, and I believe she has a kindness for you; whereby, if you two will grapple in the way of matrimony, when I am gone, I do suppose that my godson,

for love of me, will allow you to live in the garrison all the days of your life."

Peregrine assured him he would with pleasure comply with any request he should make, in behalf of two persons whom he esteemed so much. The lieutenant with a waggish sneer, which even the gravity of the situation could not prevent, thanked them both for their good-will, telling the commodore he was obliged to him for his friendship, in seeking to promote him to the command of a vessel which he himself had worn out in the service; that, notwithstanding, he should be content to take charge of her, though he could not help being shy of coming after such an able navigator.

Trunnion, exhausted as he was, smiled at this sally, and, after some pause, resumed his admonitions in this manner: "I need not talk of Pipes, because I know you'll do for him, without my recommendation; the fellow has sailed with me in many a hard gale, and I'll warrant him as stout a seaman as ever set face to the weather: but I hope you'll take care of the rest of my crew, and not disrate them after I am dead, in favour of new followers. As for that young woman, Ned Gauntlet's daughter; I'm informed as how she is an excellent wench, and has a respect for you; whereby, if you run her on board in an unlawful way, I leave my curse upon you, and trust you will never prosper in the voyage of life: but I believe you are more of an honest man than to behave so much like a pirate. I beg of all love, you wool take care of your constitution, and beware of running foul of harlots, who are no better than so many mermaids, that sit upon the rocks in the sea, and hang out a fair face for the destruction of passengers; thof I must say, for my own part, I never met with any of those sweet singers, and yet I have gone to sea for the space of thirty years. But howsomever, steer your course clear of all such brimstone b—s; shun going to law as you would shun the devil, and look upon all attorneys as devouring sharks or ravenous fish of prey. As soon as the breath is out of my body, let minute guns be fired, till I am safe under ground. I would also be buried in the red jacket I had on when I boarded and took the *Renummy*. Let my pistols, cutlass, and pocket-compass be laid in the coffin along with me. Let me be carried to the grave by my own men, rigged in the black caps and white shirts which my barge's crew were wont to wear; and they must keep a good lookout, that none of your pilfering rascallions may come and heave me up again, for the lucre of what they can get, until the carcase is belayed by a tombstone. As for the motto, or what you call it, I leave that to you and Mr. Jolter, who are scholars; but I do desire that it may not be engraved in the Greek or Latin lingos, and much less in the French, which I abominate, but in plain English, that when the angel comes to pipe *all hands*, at the great day, he may know that I am a British man, and speak to me in my mother-tongue. And now

I have no more to say, but God in heaven have mercy upon my soul, and send you all fair weather, wheresoever you are bound." So saying, he regarded every individual around him with a look of complacency, and closing his eye, composed himself to rest, while the whole audience (Pipes himself not excepted) were melted with sorrow; and Mrs. Trunnion consented to quit the room, that she might not be exposed to the unspeakable anguish of seeing him expire.

His last moments, however, were not so near as they imagined; he began to dose, and enjoyed small intervals of ease, till next day in the afternoon; during which remissions, he was heard to pour forth many pious ejaculations, expressing his hope, that, for all the heavy cargo of his sins, he should be able to surmount the puttock-shrouds of despair, and get aloft to the cross-trees of God's good favour. At last, his voice sank so low as not to be distinguished; and having lain about an hour, almost without any perceptible signs of life, he gave up the ghost, with a groan which announced his decease.

Julia was no sooner certified of this melancholy event than she ran to her aunt's chamber, weeping aloud; and immediately a very decent concert was performed by the good widow and her attendants. Peregrine and Hatchway retired till the corpse should be laid out; and Pipes, having surveyed the body with a face of rueful attention, "Well fare thy soul! old Hawser Trunnion," said he, "man and boy I have known thee these five-and-thirty years, and sure a truer heart never broke biscuit. Many a hard gale hast thou weathered: but now thy spells are all over, and thy hull fairly laid up. A better commander I'd never desire to serve; and who knows but I may help to set up thy standing rigging in another world!"

All the servants of the house were affected with the loss of their old master, and the poor people in the neighbourhood assembled at the gate, and, by repeated howlings, expressed their sorrow for the death of their charitable benefactor. Peregrine, though he felt everything which love and gratitude could inspire on this occasion, was not so much overwhelmed with affliction as to be incapable of taking the management of the family into his own hands. He gave directions about the funeral with great discretion, after having paid the compliments of condolence to his aunt, whom he consoled with the assurance of his inviolable esteem and affection. He ordered a suit of mourning to be made for every person in the garrison, and invited all the neighbouring gentlemen to the burial, not even excepting his father and brother Gam, who did not, however, honour the ceremony with their presence; nor was his mother humane enough to visit her sister-in-law in her distress.

In the method of interment, the commodore's injunctions were obeyed to a tittle; and at the same time our hero made a donation of fifty pounds to the poor of the parish, as a benefaction which his uncle had forgot to bequeath.

From "Ferdinand Count Fathom"

CHAPTER XXI

Fathom, whose own principles taught him to be suspicious, and ever upon his guard against the treachery of his fellow-creatures, could have dispensed with this instance of her care, in confining her guest to her chamber, and began to be seized with strange fancies, when he observed that there was no bolt on the inside of the door, by which he might secure himself from intrusion. In consequence of these suggestions, he proposed to take an accurate survey of every object in the apartment, and, in the course of his inquiry, had the mortification to find the dead body of a man, still warm, who had been lately stabbed, and concealed beneath several bundles of straw.

Such a discovery could not fail to fill the breast of our hero with unspeakable horror; for he concluded that he himself would undergo the same fate before morning, without the interposition of a miracle in his favour. In the first transports of his dread, he ran to the window, with a view to escape by that outlet, and found his flight effectually obstructed by divers strong bars of iron. Then his heart began to palpitate, his hair to bristle up, and his knees to totter; his thoughts teemed with presages of death and destruction; his conscience rose up in judgment against him, and he underwent a severe paroxysm of dismay and distraction. His spirits were agitated into a state of fermentation that produced a species of resolution akin to that which is inspired by brandy or other strong liquors, and, by an impulse that seemed supernatural, he was immediately hurried into measures for his own preservation.

What upon a less interesting occasion his imagination durst not propose, he now executed without scruple or remorse. He undressed the corpse that lay bleeding among the straw, and, conveying it to the bed in his arms, deposited it in the attitude of a person who sleeps at his ease; then he extinguished the light, took possession of the place from whence the body had been removed, and, holding a pistol ready cocked in each hand, waited for the signal with that determined purpose which is often the immediate production of despair. About midnight he heard the sound of feet ascending the ladder; the door was softly opened; he saw the shadow of two men stalking towards the bed, a dark lanthorn being unshrouded, directed their aim to the supposed sleeper, and he that held it thrust a poniard to his heart; the force of the blow made a compression on the chest, and a sort of groan issued from the windpipe of the defunct; the stroke was repeated, without producing a repetition of the note, so that the assassins concluded the work was effectually done, and retired for the present with a design to return and rifle the deceased at their leisure.

Never had our hero spent a moment in such agony as he felt during this operation; the whole surface of his body was covered with a cold sweat, and his nerves were relaxed with a universal palsy. In short, he remained in a trance that, in all probability, contributed to his safety; for, had he retained the use of his senses, he might have been discovered by the transports of his fear. The first use he made of his retrieved recollection was to perceive that the assassins had left the door open in their retreat; and he would have instantly availed himself of this their neglect, by sallying out upon them, at the hazard of his life, had he not been restrained by a conversation he overheard in the room below, importing, that the ruffians were going to set out upon another expedition, in hopes of finding more prey. They accordingly departed, after having laid strong injunctions upon the old woman to keep the door fast locked during their absence; and Ferdinand took his resolution without farther delay. So soon as, by his conjecture, the robbers were at a sufficient distance from the house, he rose from his lurking-place, moved softly towards the bed, and, rummaging the pockets of the deceased, found a purse well stored with ducats, of which, together with a silver watch and a diamond ring, he immediately possessed himself without scruple; then, descending with great care and circumspection into the lower apartment, stood before the old beldame, before she had the least intimation of his approach.

Accustomed as she was to the trade of blood, the hoary hag did not behold this apparition without giving signs of infinite terror and astonishment, believing it was no other than the spirit of her second guest, who had been murdered; she fell upon her knees and began to recommend herself to the protection of the saints, crossing herself with as much devotion as if she had been entitled to the particular care and attention of Heaven. Nor did her anxiety abate, when she was undeceived in this her supposition, and understood it was no phantom, but the real substance of the stranger, who, without staying to upbraid her with the enormity of her crimes, commanded her, on pain of immediate death, to produce his horse, to which being conducted, he set her upon the saddle without delay, and, mounting behind, invested her with the management of the reins, swearing, in a most peremptory tone, that the only chance she had for her life was in directing him safely to the next town; and that, so soon as she should give him the least cause to doubt her fidelity in the performance of that task, he would on the instant act the part of her executioner.

This declaration had its effect upon the withered Hecate, who, with many supplications for mercy and forgiveness, promised to guide him in safety to a certain village at the distance of two leagues, where he might lodge in security, and be provided with a fresh horse, or other convenience for pursuing his intended route. On these conditions he

told her she might deserve his clemency; and they accordingly took their departure together, she being placed astride upon the saddle, holding the bridle in one hand, and a switch in the other; and our adventurer sitting on the crupper, superintending her conduct, and keeping the muzzle of a pistol close at her ear. In this equipage they travelled across part of the same wood in which his guide had forsaken him; and it is not to be supposed that he passed his time in the most agreeable reverie, while he found himself involved in the labyrinth of those shades, which he considered as the haunts of robbery and assassination.

From "Humphry Clinker"

To Mrs. Gwyllim, Housekeeper at Brambleton Hall

I am astonished that Dr. Lewis should take upon him to give away Alderney, without my privity and concurrants. What signifies my brother's order? My brother is little better than noncompush. He would give away the shirt off his back, and the teeth out of his head; nay, as for that matter, he would have ruined the family with his ridiculous charities, if it had not been for my four quarters. What between his willfullness and his waste, his trumps and his frenzy, I lead the life of an indented slave. Alderney gave four gallons a day, ever since the calf was sent to market. There is so much milk out of my dairy, and the press must stand still: but I won't loose a cheese-paring; and the milk shall be made good, if the sarvents should go without butter. If they must needs have butter, let them make it of sheep's milk; but then my wool will suffer for want of grace; so that I must be a looser on all sides. Well, patience is like a stout Welsh poney; it bears a great deal, and trots a great way; but it will tire at the long-run. Before it's long, perhaps, I may show Matt that I was not born to be the household drudge to my dying day. Gwyn rites from Crickhowel, that the price of flannel is fallen three farthings an ell; and that's another good penny out of my pocket. When I go to market to sell, my commodity stinks; but when I want to buy the commonest thing, the owner pricks it up under my nose, and it can't be had for love nor money. I think everything runs cross at Brambleton Hall. You say the gander has broke the eggs; which is a phinumenon I don't understand; for when the fox carried off the old goose last year, he took her place, and hatched the eggs, and partected the goslings like a tender parent. Then you tell me the thunder has soured two barrels of beer in the seller. But how the thunder should get there, when the seller was double-locked, I can't comprehend. Howsomever, I won't have the beer thrown out till I see it with my own eyes. Perhaps it will recover; at least it will serve for vinegar to the sarvents. You may leave off the fires in my brother's chamber and mine, as it is

unsartain when we return. I hope, Gwyllim, you'll take care there is no waste; and have an eye to the maids, and keep them to their spinning. I think they may go very well without beer in hot weather; it serves only to inflame the blood, and set them agog after the men. Water will make them fair, and keep them cool and tamperit. Don't forget to put up in the portmantel, that cums with Williams, along with my riding-habit, hat, and feather, the viol of purl-water, and the tincktur for my stomach, being as how I am much troubled with flutterencies. This is all at present, from

Yours,

TABITHA BRAMBLE.

BATH, *April 26.*

LAURENCE STERNE

(1713 - 1768)

LAURENCE STERNE was born at Clonmel on 24th November, 1713. His father was an impecunious army officer who never rose above the rank of lieutenant. Sterne accordingly spent his childhood and part of his boyhood in one barracks after another in different parts of Ireland and England. At last he was sent to school at Halifax, and, after his father's death, to Jesus College, Cambridge. His great-grandfather (died 1683) had been master of this college, and subsequently Archbishop of York. Sterne graduated B.A. in 1736 and M.A. in 1740; he was ordained deacon in 1736, and in 1738 was presented to the living of Sutton-in-the-Forest, near York, being ordained priest in the same year. He lived at Sutton for twenty years, and his life was uneventful, save for his marriage to Elizabeth Lumley in 1741 and the birth of his daughter Lydia in 1747.

In 1759 Sterne suddenly leapt into fame by publishing two volumes of *The Life and Opinions of Tristram*

Shandy, Gentleman. The dates of the different volumes of this masterpiece are as follows: Vols. I and II, 1759; Vols. III, IV, V, and VI, 1761-1762; Vols. VII and VIII, 1765; and Vol. IX (the last) in 1767. Sterne, therefore, was forty-six years of age before he attained celebrity. He was lionized in London and had social engagements "a fortnight deep". On the strength of his success he published a collection of his sermons in seven volumes; the later volumes were decidedly more Shandean in tone than the early ones. One of his new friends, Lord Fauconberg, presented him to the perpetual curacy of Coxwold. His health, however, began to fail, and he travelled in France from February, 1762, to the summer of 1764. In the autumn and winter of 1765 he went for a tour on the Continent, which supplied him with material for his *Sentimental Journey through France and Italy* (2 vols., 1768). Soon after the appearance of this work Sterne died in his London lodgings.

To appreciate or even to define Sterne's wayward genius is difficult. He himself said: "If I thought you was able to form the least judgment or probable conjecture to yourself, of what was to come in the next page—I would tear it out of my book." He also said with much truth: "I think there is a fatality in it—I seldom go to the place I set out for." Owing either to his innate character or to his sojourn in Ireland, Sterne considered that laws were made to be broken. He vindicated the liberty of the novel, and prevented it from being a mere mirror or photographic reproduction of life. Smollett in his *Adventures of Sir Launcelot Greaves* followed the letter of *Don Quixote*; but there is more of the spirit of Cervantes in a single page of *Tristram Shandy*. The qualities which strike the casual reader of that remarkable book as its essentials appear to the true Shandean to be mere accidentals. Those qualities are, oddity, indecency, and sentimentality. Dr. Johnson said: "Nothing odd will do long. *Tristram Shandy* did not last." His axiom is quite true, but his illustration of it is unfortunate, as Sterne's masterpiece has outlived *Rasselas* and *Irene*. Scott has given a fair verdict on Sterne's indecency when he says, "it is a sin against taste, if allowed to be harmless as to morals. A handful of mud is

neither a firebrand nor a stone; but to fling it about in sport, argues coarseness of mind, and want of common manners." Sterne's sentimentality was more in accordance with the taste of his age than of ours; it was the chief defect of his qualities. His great virtue lies in his style, which Hazlitt called "the pure essence of English conversational style", and in his characters, especially Walter Shandy, Corporal Trim, and Uncle Toby, the last of whom the same critic called "one of the finest compliments ever paid to human nature". Sterne's plagiarisms from Bishop Hall, Burton, and other earlier writers were justifiable, as the borrowings of genius always are; indeed when Sterne's debt to Burton was first pointed out (1798) the price of the *Anatomy of Melancholy* was doubled in the book-market, and Burton owed at least a little of his subsequent fame to his plagiarist. Sterne has always been loved by lovers of true humour; as he says himself: "I must expect to have a party against me of many hundreds, who either do not, or will not, laugh."

[J. Ferriar, *Illustrations of Sterne*; H. D. Traill, *Sterne* (English Men of Letters Series); W. Sichel, *Sterne: a Study*; L. Melville, *The Life and Letters of Laurence Sterne*; P. Fitzgerald, *Life of Sterne*; W. L. Cross, *The Life and Times of Laurence Sterne*.]

From "Tristram Shandy"

BOOK V, CHAPTER VII

My young master in London is dead, said Obadiah.

A green sattin night-gown of my mother's which had been twice scoured, was the first idea which Obadiah's exclamation brought into

Susannah's head.—Well might Locke write a chapter upon the imperfection of words. Then, quoth Susannah, we must all go into mourning. But note a second time: the word mourning, notwithstanding Susannah made use of it herself,—failed also of doing its office; it excited not one single idea, tinged either with grey or black,—all was green. The green sattin night-gown hung there still.

O! 'twill be the death of my poor mistress, cried Susannah. My mother's whole wardrobe followed. What a procession! her red damask, her orange tawney, her white and yellow lustrings, her brown taffata, her bone-laced caps, her bed-gowns, and comfortable under-petticoats. Not a rag was left behind. "No, she will never look up again," said Susannah.

We had a fat, foolish scullion,—my father, I think, kept her for her simplicity; she had been all autumn struggling with a dropsy. He is dead, said Obadiah, he is certainly dead! So am not I, said the foolish scullion.

Here is sad news, Trim, cried Susannah, wiping her eyes as Trim stepp'd into the kitchen,—master Bobby is dead and buried, the funeral was an interpolation of Susannah's—we shall have all to go into mourning, said Susannah.

I hope not, said Trim. You hope not! cried Susannah earnestly. The mourning ran not in Trim's head, whatever it did in Susannah's. I hope—said Trim, explaining himself, I hope in God the news is not true. I heard the letter read with my own ears, answered Obadiah; and we shall have a terrible piece of work of it in stubbing the Ox-moor. Oh! he's dead, said Susannah. As sure, said the scullion, as I'm alive.

I lament for him from my heart and my soul, said Trim, fetching a sigh—Poor creature!—poor boy!—poor gentleman!

He was alive last Whitsontide! said the coachman. Whitsontide! alas! cried Trim, extending his right arm, and falling instantly into the same attitude in which he read the sermon—what is Whitsontide, Jonathan (for that was the coachman's name), or Shrovetide, or any tide or time past, to this? Are we not here now, continued the corporal (striking the end of his stick perpendicularly upon the floor so as to give an idea of health and stability) and are we not (dropping his hat upon the ground) gone! in a moment! 'Twas infinitely striking! Susannah burst into a flood of tears. We are not stocks and stones. Jonathan, Obadiah, the cook-maid, all melted. The foolish fat scullion herself, who was scouring a fish-kettle upon her knees, was rous'd with it. The whole kitchen crowded about the corporal.

Now, as I perceive plainly, that the preservation of our constitution in church and state,—and possibly the preservation of the whole world—or what is the same thing, the distribution and balance of its property and power, may in time to come depend greatly upon the right under-

standing of this stroke of the corporal's eloquence—I do demand your attention—your worships and reverences, for any ten pages together, take them where you will in any other part of the work, shall sleep for it at your ease.

I said, “we were not stocks and stones”—’tis very well. I should have added, nor are we angels, I wish we were,—but men clothed with bodies, and governed by our imaginations;—and what a junketing piece of work of it there is, betwixt these and our seven senses, especially some of them, for my own part, I own it, I am ashamed to confess. Let it suffice to affirm, that of all the senses, the eye (for I absolutely deny the touch, though most of your Barbati, I know, are for it) has the quickest commerce with the soul,—gives a smarter stroke, and leaves something more inexpressible upon the fancy, than words can either convey—or sometimes get rid of.

I’ve gone a little about—no matter, ’tis for health—let us only carry it back in our mind to the mortality of Trim’s hat. “Are we not here now, and gone in a moment?”—There was nothing in the sentence—’twas one of your self-evident truths we have the advantage of hearing every day; and if Trim had not trusted more to his hat than his head—he had made nothing at all of it.

“Are we not here now;” continued the corporal, “and are we not” (dropping his hat plumb upon the ground—and pausing, before he pronounced the word)—“gone! in a moment?” The descent of the hat was as if a heavy lump of clay had been kneaded into the crown of it. Nothing could have expressed the sentiment of mortality, of which it was the type and fore-runner, like it—the corporal’s eye fixed upon it, as upon a corpse,—and Susannah burst into a flood of tears.

Now—Ten thousand, and ten thousand times ten thousand (for matter and motion are infinite) are the ways by which a hat may be dropped upon the ground, without any effect. Had he flung it, or thrown it, or cast it, or skimmed it, or squirted it, or let it slip or fall in any possible direction under heaven,—or in the best direction that could be given to it,—had he dropped it like a goose—like a puppy—like an ass—or in doing it, or even after he had done, had he looked like a fool—like a ninny—like a nincompoop—it had fail’d, and the effect upon the heart had been lost.

Ye who govern this mighty world and its mighty concerns with the engines of eloquence,—who heat it, and cool it, and melt it, and mollify it—and then harden it again to your purpose.

Ye who wind and turn the passions with this great windlass, and, having done it, lead the owners of them, whither ye think meet—

Ye, lastly, who drive—and why not, Ye also who are driven, like turkeys to market with a stick and a red clout—meditate—meditate, I beseech you, upon Trim’s hat.

BOOK III, CHAPTER XXII

When Corporal Trim had brought his two mortars to bear, he was delighted with his handy-work above measure; and knowing what a pleasure it would be to his master to see them, he was not able to resist the desire he had of carrying them directly into his parlour.

Now next to the moral lesson I had in view in mentioning the affair of hinges, I had a speculative consideration arising out of it, and it is this.

Had the parlour door opened and turn'd upon its hinges, as a door should do—

Or for example, as cleverly as our government has been turning upon its hinges—(that is, in case things have all gone well with your worship—otherwise I give up my simile) in this case, I say, there had been no danger either to master or man, in Corporal Trim's peeping in: the moment he had beheld my father and my Uncle Toby fast asleep—the respectfulness of his carriage was such, he would have retired as silent as death, and left them both in their arm-chairs, dreaming as happy as he had found them: but the thing was, morally speaking, so very impracticable, that for the many years in which this hinge was suffered to be out of order, and amongst the hourly grievances my father submitted to upon its account—this was one; that he never folded his arms to take his nap after dinner, but the thoughts of being unavoidably awakened by the first person who should open the door, was always uppermost in his imagination, and so incessantly stepp'd in betwixt him and the first balmy presage of his repose, as to rob him, as he often declared, of the whole sweets of it.

“When things move upon bad hinges, an' please your lordships, how can it be otherwise?”

Pray what's the matter? Who is there? cried my father, waking, the moment the door began to creak. I wish the smith would give a peep at that confounded hinge. 'Tis nothing, an' please your honour, said Trim, but two mortars I am bringing in. They shan't make a clatter with them here, cried my father hastily—If Dr. Slop has any drugs to pound, let him do it in the kitchen. May it please your honour, cried Trim, they are two mortar-pieces for a siege next summer, which I have been making out of a pair of jack-boots, which Obadiah told me your honour had left off wearing.—By Heaven! cried my father, springing out of his chair, as he swore—I have not one appointment belonging to me, which I set so much store by as I do these jack-boots—they were our great grandfather's, brother Toby—they were hereditary. Then I fear, quoth my uncle Toby, Trim has cut off the entail.—I have only cut off the tops, an' please your honour, cried Trim.—I hate perpetuities as much as any man alive, cried my father—but these jack-boots, continued he (smiling, though very angry at the same time) have been in the family,

brother, ever since the civil wars;—Sir Roger Shandy wore them at the battle of Marston-Moor—I declare I would not have taken ten pounds for them.—I'll pay you the money, brother Shandy, quoth my uncle Toby, looking at the two mortars with infinite pleasure, and putting his hand into his breeches pocket as he viewed them—I'll pay you the ten pounds this moment with all my heart and soul.—

Brother Toby, replied my father, altering his tone, you care not what money you dissipate and throw away, provided, continued he, 'tis but upon a SIEGE.—Have I not one hundred and twenty pounds a year, besides my half pay? cried my uncle Toby.—What is that—replied my father hastily—to ten pounds for a pair of jack-boots?—twelve guineas for your pontoons?—half as much for your Dutch draw-bridge?—to say nothing of the train of little brass artillery you bespoke last week, with twenty other preparations for the siege of Messina: believe me, dear brother Toby, continued my father, taking him kindly by the hand,—these military operations of yours are above your strength;—you mean well, brother—but they carry you into greater expences than you were first aware of;—and take my word, dear Toby, they will in the end quite ruin your fortune, and make a beggar of you.—What signifies it if they do, brother, replied my uncle Toby, so long as we know 'tis for the good of the nation?—

My father could not help smiling for his soul—his anger at the worst was never more than a spark;—and the zeal and simplicity of Trim—and the generous (though hobby-horsical) gallantry of my uncle Toby, brought him into perfect good humour with them in an instant.

Generous souls!—God prosper you both, and your mortar-pieces too! quoth my father to himself.

From “A Sentimental Journey”

I had some occasion (I forget what) to step into the courtyard, as I settled this account; and remember I walk'd down stairs in no small triumph with the conceit of my reasoning—Beshrew the sombre pencil! said I vauntingly—for I envy not its power, which paints the evils of life with so hard and deadly a colouring. The mind sits terrified at the objects she has magnified herself, and blackened: reduce them to their proper size and hue, she overlooks them—'Tis true, said I, correcting the proposition—the Bastile is not an evil to be despised—But strip it of its powers—fill up the fosse—unbarricade the doors—call it simply a confinement, and suppose 'tis some tyrant of a distemper—and not of a man, which holds you in it—the evil vanishes, and you bear the other half without complaint.

I was interrupted in the hey-day of this soliloquy, with a voice which

I took to be of a child, which complained "it could not get out".—I look'd up and down the passage, and seeing neither man, woman, or child, I went out without further attention.

In my return back through the passage, I heard the same words, repeated twice over; and looking up, I saw it was a starling hung in a little cage;—"I can't get out—I can't get out," said the starling.

I stood looking at the bird: and to every person who came through the passage it ran fluttering to the side towards which they approach'd it, with the same lamentation of its captivity—"I can't get out," said the starling—God help thee! said I—but I'll let thee out, cost what it will; so I turned about the cage to get the door; it was twisted and double twisted so fast with wire, there was no getting it open without pulling the cage to pieces—I took both hands to it.

The bird flew to the place where I was attempting his deliverance, and thrusting his head through the trellis, pressed his breast against it, as if impatient—I fear, poor creature! said I, I cannot set thee at liberty—"No," said the starling, "I can't get out—I can't get out," said the starling.

I vow I never had my affections more tenderly awakened; or do I remember an incident in my life, where the dissipated spirits, to which my reason had been a bubble, were so suddenly call'd home. Mechanical as the notes were, yet so true in tune to nature were they chaunted, that in one moment they over-threw all my systematic reasonings upon the Bastile; and I heavily walk'd up stairs, unsaying every word I had said in going down them.

Disguise thyself as thou wilt, still, Slavery! said I—still thou art a bitter draught! and though thousands in all ages have been made to drink of thee, thou art no less bitter on that account. 'Tis thou, thrice sweet and gracious goddess, addressing myself to LIBERTY, whom all in public or in private worship, whose taste is grateful, and ever will be so, till NATURE herself shall change—no tint of words can spot thy snowy mantle, or chymic power turn thy sceptre into iron—with thee to smile upon him as he eats his crust, the swain is happier than his monarch, from whose court thou art exiled—Gracious heaven! cried I, kneeling down upon the last step but one in my ascent, grant me but health, thou great Bestower of it, and give me but this fair goddess as my companion—and shower down thy mitres, if it seems good unto thy divine providence, upon those heads which are aching for them.

ROBERT PALTOCK

(1697 - 1767)

ROBERT PALTOCK was born in 1697, and was the only son of Thomas Paltock of St. James's, Westminster. Very little is known of his life; it is believed that he was educated at St. Paul's School; he was certainly an attorney, and for many years resided at Clement's Inn. He died on 20th March, 1767.

The Life and Adventures of Peter Wilkins, a Cornish Man, with an Introduction by R. S., a passenger in the Hector, appeared in two duodecimo volumes in 1751. It had some success, and was soon after printed in Dublin. Several editions appeared, and the book attracted many young readers, but still the author of it remained unknown, though introduction and dedication were signed with the initials "R. P.". In 1800 it achieved the signal honour of being turned into a pantomime at Sadler's Wells. In 1802 a magazine article gave the author's name correctly, but it was not widely known until 1835,

when the agreement between Paltock and his publisher Dodsley was discovered. His name first appeared on the title page in 1839. Since then the book has been frequently reprinted, in whole or part. *Peter Wilkins* is a minor classic; it originally delighted boys, and now delights "children of a larger growth". Coleridge, Scott, Southey, Lamb, and Leigh Hunt admired it fervently. It recalls in some of its features both *Robinson Crusoe* and *Gulliver's Travels*; but Paltock is much happier when following Defoe than when endeavouring to follow Swift. No one who has read of them will ever forget the Glumms and Gawries, the flying men and women, the strange land of twilight which they inhabit, and the charming heroine Youwarkee. It is hard to imagine a stronger contrast than that between Paltock's fantastic romance and the two great novels published in the same year—*Amelia* and *Peregrine Pickle*.

From "The Life of Peter Wilkins"

During my soliloquy the voices increased, and then by degrees diminished as usual; but I had scarce got my gun in my hand, to pursue my resolution of showing myself to those who uttered them, when I felt such a thump upon the roof of my ante-chamber as shook the whole fabric, and set me all over in a tremor; I then heard a sort of shriek, and a rustle near the door of my apartment, all which together seemed very terrible. But I, having before determined to see what and who it was, resolutely opened my door and leaped out. I saw nobody; all was quite silent, and nothing that I could perceive but my own fears a moving. I went then softly to the corner of the building, and there, looking down

by the glimmer of my lamp, which stood in the window, I saw something in human shape lying at my feet. I gave the word, Who's there? Still no one answered. My heart was ready to force a way through my side. I was for a while fixed to the earth like a statue. At length recovering, I stepped in, fetched my lamp, and returning, saw the very beautiful face my Patty appeared under in my dream; and not considering that it was only a dream, I verily thought I had my Patty before me, but she seemed to be stone dead. Upon viewing her other parts, for I had never yet removed my eyes from her face, I found she had a sort of brown chaplet, like lace, round her head, under and about which her hair was tucked up and twined; and she seemed to me to be clothed in a thin hair-coloured silk garment, which, upon trying to raise her, I found to be quite warm, and therefore hoped there was life in the body it contained. I then took her into my arms, and treading a step backwards with her, I put out my lamp; however, having her in my arms, I conveyed her through the doorway in the dark, into my grotto; here I laid her upon my bed, and then ran out for my lamp.

This, thinks I, is an amazing adventure. How could Patty come here, and dressed in silk and whalebone too? sure that is not the reigning fashion in England now? But my dream said she was dead. Why truly, says I, so she seems to be. But be it so, she is warm. Whether this is the place for persons to inhabit after death or not, I cannot tell (for I see there are people here, though I do not know them); but be it as it will, she feels as flesh and blood; and if I can but bring her to stir and act again as my wife, what matters it to me what she is! it will be a great blessing and comfort to me, for she never would have come to this very spot but for my good.

Top-full of these thoughts, I re-entered my grotto, shut my door, and lighted my lamp; when going to my Patty (as I delighted to fancy her), I thought I saw her eyes stir a little. I then set the lamp further off, for fear of offending them if she should look up; and warming the last glass I had reserved of my madeira, I carried it to her, but she never stirred. I now supposed the fall had absolutely killed her, and was prodigiously grieved, when laying my hand on her breast I perceived the fountain of life had some motion. This gave me infinite pleasure; so not despairing, I dipped my finger in the wine, and moistened her lips with it two or three times, and I imagined they opened a little. Upon this I bethought me, and taking a tea-spoon, I gently poured a few drops of the wine by that means into her mouth. Finding she swallowed it, I poured in another spoonful, and another, till I brought her to herself so well as to be able to sit up. All this I did by a glimmering light, which the lamp afforded from a distant part of the room, where I had placed it, as I have said, out of her sight.

I then spoke to her and asked divers questions, as if she had really

been Patty and understood me; in return of which, she uttered a language I had no idea of, though in the most musical tone and with the sweetest accent I ever heard. It grieved me I could not understand her. However, thinking she might like to be upon her feet, I went to lift her off the bed, when she felt to my touch in the oddest manner imaginable; for while in one respect it was as though she had been cased in whalebone, it was at the same time as soft and warm as if she had been naked.

I then took her in my arms and carried her into my ante-chamber again; where I would fain have entered into conversation, but found she and I could make nothing of it together, unless we could understand one another's speech. It is very strange my dream should have prepossessed me so of Patty, and of the alteration of her countenance, that I could by no means persuade myself the person I had with me was not she; though, upon a deliberate comparison, Patty, as pleasing as she always was to my taste, would no more come up to this fair creature than a coarse alewife would to Venus herself.

You may imagine we stared heartily at each other, and I doubted not but she wondered as much as I by what means we came so near each other. I offered her everything in my grotto which I thought might please her, some of which she gratefully received, as appeared by her looks and behaviour. But she avoided my lamp, and always placed her back toward it. I observing that, and ascribing it to her modesty, in my company, let her have her will, and took care to set it in such a position myself as seemed agreeable to her, though it deprived me of a prospect I very much admired.

After we had sat a good while, now and then, I may say, chattering to one another, she got up and took a turn or two round about the room. When I saw her in that attitude, her grace and motion perfectly charmed me, and her shape was incomparable; but the strangeness of her dress put me to my trumps, to conceive either what it was, or how it was put on.

Well, we supped together, and I set the best of everything I had before her, nor could either of us forbear speaking in our own tongue, though we were sensible neither of us understood the other. After supper I gave her some of my cordials, for which she showed great tokens of thankfulness, and often, in her way, by signs and gestures, which were very far from being insignificant, expressed her gratitude for my kindness. When supper had been some time over, I showed her my bed, and made signs for her to go to it; but she seemed very shy of that, till I showed her where I meant to lie myself, by pointing to myself, then to that, and again pointing to her and to my bed. When at length I had made this matter intelligible to her, she lay down very composedly; and after I had taken care of my fire, and set the things I had been using for supper

in their places, I laid myself down too; for I could have no suspicious thoughts, or fear of danger, from a form so excellent.

I treated her for some time with all the respect imaginable, and never suffered her to do the least part of my work. It was very inconvenient to both of us, only to know each other's meaning by signs; but I could not be otherwise than pleased to see that she endeavoured all in her power to learn to talk like me. Indeed I was not behind-hand with her in that respect, striving all I could to imitate her. What I all the while wondered at was, she never showed the least disquiet at her confinement; for I kept my door shut at first, through fear of losing her, thinking she would have taken an opportunity to run away from me, for little did I then think she could fly.

(From *Chapter XIV.*)

THOMAS GRAY

(1716 – 1771)

THOMAS GRAY was born in London on 26th December, 1716. His mother had twelve children, of whom he alone grew up. His father, Philip Gray, was a money-scrivener; he was a man of violent temper, and a bad husband and father. Gray was sent to Eton in 1727; he was already of a studious disposition, and was shy and sensitive. In 1734 he entered Peterhouse, Cambridge, where his maternal uncle had been a fellow. He did not graduate at the normal time, and though he studied hard he seems to have followed no regular plan. He particularly disliked mathematics, but read Greek, Latin, French, and Italian voraciously, and had a passion for accurate knowledge in such subjects as entomology and botany. He left Cambridge in 1738, and in the following year went a tour on the Continent with Horace Walpole (q.v.), who had been his friend at

Eton and Cambridge. It is typical of the scholarly bent of his mind that he studied the *De Bello Gallico* as he travelled through France, "Caesaris visens monumenta magni". Livy and Silius Italicus accompanied him as he crossed the Alps. He eventually quarrelled with Walpole, and continued his travels alone. In 1741 he visited the Grande Chartreuse, and left behind him a beautiful poem in Latin alcaics, commencing "O tu severi religio loci". He returned to England in the same year, and spent some time in London. In 1742 he produced, for him, a considerable amount of poetry, some of it fragmentary, as the ambitious *De Principiis Cogitandi*, a poem which attempted to render Locke into Lucretian hexameters, and *Agrippina*, a tragedy; but some of it completed, such as the *Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College* and the *Hymn to Adversity*. In 1742,

through lack of a more definite occupation, he returned to Peterhouse. He was destined to spend most of the rest of his life at Cambridge, although he never held a fellowship, and disliked many of those who did. In 1744 he proceeded to the degree of LL.B. In February, 1751, he published the famous *Elegy*; it had probably been drafted some seven years previously, but the work of polishing it was slow. He would not have published it even when he did had it not been impudently pirated. His other principal poems were *The Progress of Poesy* (1754), *The Bard* (1755), *The Descent of Odin* (1761), *The Triumphs of Owen* (1768), and *The Death of Hoel* (1768). In 1756 Gray migrated to Pembroke College, which had long been his spiritual home, on account of a stupid practical joke played upon him by some of the fellow-commoners of Peterhouse. During the last years of his life Gray became rather less sedentary in his habits, and went several long walking tours, visiting Scotland, Yorkshire, the English Lakes, Derbyshire, and the neighbourhood of Southampton. To his credit Gray had declined the offer of the Laureateship in 1757, so that the mantle of Colley Cibber fell upon William Whitehead. In 1768 he accepted the chair of modern history at Cambridge, which he had vainly applied for six years previously. The post was a sinecure, and although he intended to lecture he did not do so. He took ill in hall on 24th July, 1771, and died of gout in the stomach six days afterwards.

Gray is perhaps the least productive of all the greater English poets, if he be, as he usually is,

admitted to their number. No man has won so large a reputation with so small an amount of work. There are several causes to account for his sterility. He seldom enjoyed robust health, and seems to have lived in a state of gentle melancholy, or *leucocholy* as he himself called it. He was not obliged to work for his living. One of his favourite maxims was "to be employed is to be happy", and he himself was never adequately employed. Moreover, Cambridge in those days was not an exhilarating place; many of the dons found their sole recreation in bickering with each other, and many were lacking not only in learning but in any desire to learn. Perhaps, however, the main cause of Gray's sterility was the great load of learning which he bore. He was reputed to be the most learned man in Europe. He was one of the best classical scholars of his day. He knew the literature and history of England, of France, and of Italy. He was interested in criticism, metaphysics, morals, and politics; he had a fine taste in painting, prints, architecture, and gardening. He excelled in his knowledge of botany, zoology, and entomology. He was also a good musician. All this learning tended to make him over-fastidious in his writings. So Gray's poems occupy a few pages only in any collection, and yet they are among the best poems of their kind in English. They are, perhaps, too highly polished, and give an impression of cold perfection. It was not for nothing that he composed so much Latin verse; he would seem to have written English verse somewhat on the same principles, restlessly searching for exactly the right word.

The *Elegy* is popular because it contains much commonplace thought more exquisitely expressed than it had been before, or is ever likely to be again. The two Pindaric odes, though marred by inversions and personifications, are not totally unlike Pindar's poems, as are most other "Pindarics", from Cowley downwards. In Gray's delightful *Letters*, which are infinitely various, we can read the whole story of his life and personality. Were it not for them we should not know for certain that he possessed that gentle spirit of humour which is often complementary to a gentle spirit of melancholy. They are full of scholarship, wisdom, and wit in the best sense of the word.

Gray's friend Dr. Wharton, writing of the poet a fortnight after

he died, said of him: "He never spoke out." Matthew Arnold, in his brief essay on Gray, has taken these four casually-written words as supplying the key to Gray's character, as a man and as a poet. To the present writer he does not appear to be a poet who had large reserves of poetry in the background, reserves upon which he never drew; and who might have written profusely had he been born a hundred years earlier or fifty years later. He seems to be, rather, a scholar first and foremost, a scientist and an archæologist next; poetry was only fourth on the list of his intellectual pursuits.

[Sir E. Gosse, *Gray* (English Men of Letters Series); D. C. Tovey, *Gray and his Friends*; *Gray's Letters*, edited by D. C. Tovey.]

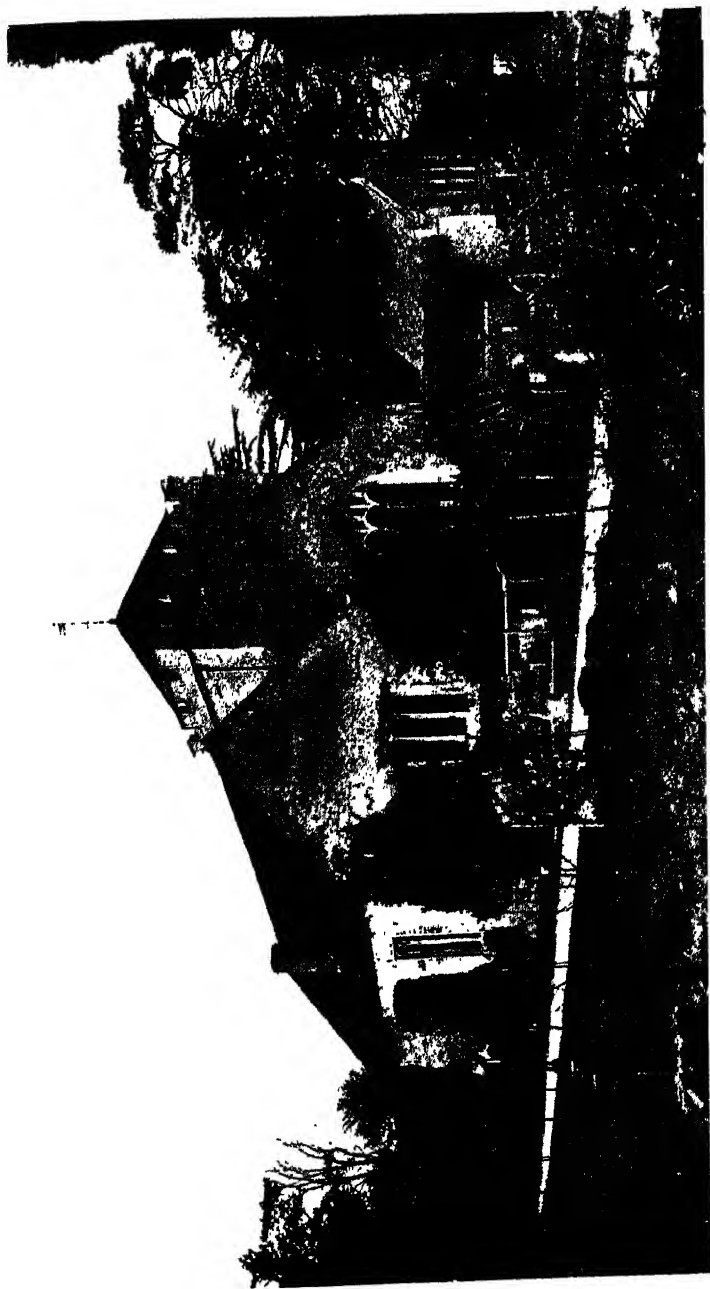
Elegy Written in a Country Church-yard

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds;

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such as, wand'ring near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mould'ring heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude Forefathers of the hamlet sleep.



STOKE POGES CHURCH AND CHURCHYARD

Where Gray wrote his *Elegy*

The breezy call of incense-breathing Morn,
The swallow twitt'ring from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
Or busy housewife ply her evening care;
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke;
How jocund did they drive their team afield!
How bowed the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
Nor Grandeur hear, with a disdainful smile,
The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Awaits alike th' inevitable hour.
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye Proud, impute to these the fault,
If Mem'ry o'er their tomb no trophies raise,
Where thro' the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn or animated bust
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
Can Honour's voice provoke the silent dust,
Or Flatt'ry soothe the dull cold ear of Death?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands, that the rod of empire might have swayed,
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre.

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page
Rich with the spoils of time did ne'er unroll;
Chill Penury repressed their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear;
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village-Hampden, that with dauntless breast
The little tyrant of his fields withstood;
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood.

Th' applause of list'ning senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their history in a nation's eyes,

Their lot forbad; nor circumscribed alone
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined;
Forbad to wade through slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind,

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,
To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,
Or heap the shrine of Luxury and Pride
With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,
Their sober wishes never learned to stray;
Along the cool sequestered vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

Yet ev'n these bones from insult to protect
Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
With uncouth rhimes and shapeless sculpture decked,
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by th' unlettered Muse,
The place of fame and elegy supply;
And many a holy text around she strews,
That teach the rustic moralist to die.

For who, to dumb Forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing anxious being e'er resigned,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing, ling'ring look behind?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
Some pious drops the closing eye requires;
Ev'n from the tomb the voice of Nature cries,
Ev'n in our ashes live their wonted fires.

For thee, who mindful of th' unhonoured Dead
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate;
If chance, by lonely Contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate,

Haply some hoary-headed swain may say,
"Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn.

"There at the foot of yonder nodding beech,
That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,
His listless length at noontide would he stretch,
And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

"Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
Mutt'ring his wayward fancies he would rove,
Now drooping, woeful wan, like one forlorn,
Or crazed with care, or crossed in hopeless love.

"One morn I missed him on the customed hill,
Along the heath and near his fav'rite tree;
Another came; nor yet beside the rill,
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he;

"The next with dirges due, in sad array,
Slow thro' the church-way path we saw him borne.
Approach and read (for thou can'st read) the lay
Graved on the stone beneath yon aged thorn."

Epitaph

Here rests his head upon the lap of Earth
A Youth to Fortune and to Fame unknown.
Fair Science frowned not on his humble birth,
And Melancholy marked him for her own.

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere,
Heav'n did a recompense as largely send;

He gave to Misery all he had, a tear,
 He gained from Heav'n ('twas all he wished) a friend.

No farther seek his merits to disclose,
 Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,
 (There they alike in trembling hope repose,)
 The bosom of his Father and his God.

Ode on the Spring

Lo! where the rosy-bosomed Hours,
 Fair Venus' train, appear,
 Disclose the long-expecting flowers,
 And wake the purple year!
 The Attic warbler pours her throat,
 Responsive to the cuckoo's note,
 The untaught harmony of spring;
 While, whispering pleasure as they fly,
 Cool Zephyrs thro' the clear blue sky
 Their gathered fragrance fling.

Where'er the oak's thick branches stretch
 A broader browner shade,
 Where'er the rude and moss-grown beech
 O'er-canopies the glade,
 Beside some water's rushy brink
 With me the Muse shall sit, and think
 (At ease reclined in rustic state)
 How vain the ardour of the crowd,
 How low, how little are the proud,
 How indigent the great!

Still is the toiling hand of Care;
 The panting herds repose;
 Yet hark, how through the peopled air
 The busy murmur glows!
 The insect youth are on the wing,
 Eager to taste the honied spring,
 And float amid the liquid noon;
 Some lightly o'er the current skim,
 Some show their gaily-gilded trim
 Quick-glancing to the sun.

To Contemplation's sober eye
 Such is the race of Man;
 And they that creep, and they that fly,
 Shall end where they began.
 Alike the Busy and the Gay
 But flutter through life's little day,
 In fortune's varying colours drest;
 Brushed by the hand of rough Mischance,
 Or chilled by age, their airy dance
 They leave, in dust to rest.

Methinks I hear in accents low
 The sportive kind reply:
 Poor moralist! and what art thou?
 A solitary fly!
 Thy joys no glittering female meets,
 No hive hast thou of hoarded sweets,
 No painted plumage to display;
 On hasty wings thy youth is flown,
 Thy sun is set, thy spring is gone—
 We frolic, while 'tis May.

Letter CLVI

December 19, 1757.

DEAR MASON,—Though I very well know the bland emollient saponaceous qualities both of sack and silver, yet if any great man would say to me, "I make you rat-catcher to his Majesty, with a salary of £300 a year and two butts of the best Malaga; and though it has been usual to catch a mouse or two, for form's sake, in public once a year, yet to you, sir, we shall not stand upon these things," I cannot say I should jump at it; nay, if they would drop the very name of the office, and call me Sinecure to the King's Majesty, I should still feel a little awkward, and think everybody I saw smelt a rat about me; but I do not pretend to blame any one else that has not the same sensations; for my part I would rather be serjeant trumpeter or pinmaker to the palace. Nevertheless I interest myself a little in the history of it, and rather wish somebody may accept it, that will retrieve the credit of the thing, if it be retrievable, or ever had any credit. Rowe was, I think, the last man of character that had it. As to Settle, whom you mention, he belonged to my lord mayor not to the king. Eusden was a person of great hopes in his youth, though at last he turned out a drunken parson. Dryden was as disgraceful to the office, from his character, as the poorest

scribbler could have been from his verses. The office itself has always humbled the professor hitherto (even in an age when kings were somebody), if he were a poor writer by making him more conspicuous, and if he were a good one by setting him at war with the little fry of his own profession, for there are poets little enough to envy even a poet-laureate.

I am obliged to you for your news; pray send me some more, and better of the sort. I can tell you nothing in return; so your generosity will be the greater;—only Dick is going to give up his rooms, and live at Ashwell. Mr. Treasurer sets Sir M. Lamb at nought, and says he has sent him reasons half a sheet at a time; and Mr. Brown attests his veracity as an eye-witness. I have had nine pages of criticism on the "Bard" sent me in an anonymous letter, directed to the Reverend Mr. G. at Strawberry Hill; and if I have a mind to hear as much more on the other Ode, I am told where I may direct. He seems a good sensible man, and I dare say a clergyman. He is very frank, and indeed much ruder than he means to be. Adieu, dear Mason, and believe me that I am too.

SAMUEL JOHNSON

(1709 – 1784)

SAMUEL JOHNSON was born at Lichfield on 18th September, 1709. His father, Michael Johnson, was a bookseller of Lichfield. Johnson mainly educated himself in his father's shop, though he attended schools at Lichfield and at Stourbridge. In 1728 he went up to Pembroke College, Oxford; the exact duration of his stay there is uncertain, but he did not graduate, though he acquired a reputation for learning, and translated Pope's *Messiah* into Latin verse. His Latin is that of Politian rather than that of Virgil; but Pope himself said that future ages might feel uncertain as to which version was the original and which the translation. Johnson's father died on

the verge of bankruptcy in 1731, and Johnson had some difficulty in securing employment. He became an usher at Market Bosworth Grammar School in 1732, but hated his work, and went to Birmingham, where he assisted the publisher of the *Birmingham Journal*, and translated Lobo's *Voyage to Abyssinia* from the French—his first book. In 1735 he married a widow, Mrs. Porter, who was more than twenty years his senior. He described the match himself as "a love-match on both sides". He then attempted to start a school at Edial Hall, near Lichfield, but the project was a failure. His grotesque appearance and involuntary gesticulations both terrified

and amused his pupils, who were but little more numerous than those of Aristides in the Greek epigram—four walls and three benches. Johnson decided to march on London, with three acts of his tragedy of *Irene* in his pocket; he left Lichfield in March, 1737, practically moneyless, and accompanied by David Garrick, one of his few pupils. Johnson began by contributing to the *Gentleman's Magazine*, and edited reports of the debates in Parliament, which to avoid legal penalties were entitled *Reports of the Debates of the Senate of Lilliput*, and provided with fictitious names. After a while he wrote these reports himself, continuing to do so from July, 1741, to March, 1744. He based his reports upon very inadequate notes, and always took care that "the Whig dogs should not have the best of it". In 1738 he published his poem *London*, which is a free imitation of the third satire of Juvenal. He gained a certain amount of fame, and ten guineas in cash. In 1744 he published his *Life of Richard Savage*, a poet and outcast from society, who claimed to be an earl's son, and whom Johnson had known intimately. In 1747 he issued the plan of his famous *Dictionary*, and began work upon it in the same year. He used an interleaved copy of Bailey's *Dictionary* (1721), and employed six amanuenses, five of whom were Scots. While at work on the *Dictionary* Johnson wrote his second Juvenalian poem, *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, a noble adaptation of the tenth Satire. He received fifteen guineas for it. In the same year (1749) Garrick procured the production of Johnson's tragedy

Irene. It ran for nine nights, and brought its author in almost £300, but apart from this it was a failure. Johnson did not visualize his characters, and the play consists of a series of moral dialogues, without any adequate action. In 1750 Johnson commenced to publish *The Rambler*, a paper modelled upon *The Spectator*. It appeared twice weekly, on Tuesdays and Saturdays, from March, 1750, to March, 1752. Johnson wrote it all himself, with the exception of five numbers, one of which was written by Samuel Richardson, and the other four by lady devotees of Johnson. Its sale as a periodical was only fairly satisfactory; but it sold well when collected and published. Although it contains plenty of sound sense, it is little read nowadays; it is over-weighted with moralizing, and its style is ponderous. In 1752 Johnson suffered a heavy blow in the death of his wife. He completed and published his *Dictionary* in 1755, and on 7th February of that year wrote his famous letter to the Earl of Chesterfield, in which he rejected the earl's belated overtures towards becoming the patron of the book. The *Dictionary* was at once considered to be the best in the language, as it was; Johnson was thought to be a match, single-handed, for the forty members of the French Academy. The definitions in the *Dictionary* are singularly clear and well-expressed; its quotations are apt and well-chosen. Before the publication of the *Dictionary* some of his friends helped him to secure the M.A. degree of Oxford, in order that it might appear on the title page. In April, 1758, the first number of his

Idler appeared; it was published every Saturday in Newbery's *Universal Chronicle*, and continued for two years. The papers in *The Idler* are shorter than those in *The Rambler*, and are somewhat less heavy-handed. The characters have English instead of Latin names, and there is not quite so much moralizing. In 1759 Johnson's mother died, and to pay the expenses of her funeral he wrote *Rasselas* (originally known as *The Prince of Abyssinia*) in less than a week, and received £100 for it. *Rasselas* is a moral essay rather than a novel; it might say, with the Needy Knife-Grinder, "Story, God bless you, I have none to tell, sir". It is somewhat heavy, but still ranks as a minor classic of the eighteenth century. It was the most popular of his works, and was translated into nine languages. In 1762 Johnson received a pension of £300 from Lord Bute, and so was able to spend his time as he liked, that is to say, he was able to talk much and write little. On 16th May, 1763, Boswell was introduced to Johnson; in the same year The Club (afterwards known as The Literary Club) was founded. In 1765 Johnson produced his long-promised edition of Shakespeare, in eight volumes. It is customary to follow Macaulay in calling this a slovenly and worthless edition. As a matter of fact, Johnson had one quality which is unfortunately rare among Shakespearean scholars—he had plenty of common sense—and his shrewd sagacity and knowledge of the world kept him right where other scholars writing "under the shelter of academic bowers" have gone astray. In 1777 Johnson began to

write what was his masterpiece—*The Lives of the Poets* (published 1779–1781). It is true that, as Mrs. Browning said, he left the poets out; many of those men whose biographies he chose to write are unknown to-day even to professional scholars (a dozen out of the fifty-two are not mentioned in the present work), and his treatment of some of the great men that he included—notably of Milton and Gray—is not satisfactory. With all its faults, however, *The Lives of the Poets* remains one of the best books of criticism in English. It is transparently honest, and is full of common sense and its author's immense knowledge of life. Moreover, frequent indulgence in conversation tended to make Johnson's style less heavy and slightly more colloquial. In 1775 Johnson received the degree of D.C.L. from the University of Oxford; he had received the LL.D. degree from Trinity College, Dublin, in 1765. He seldom used the title of Doctor himself.

In 1773 Johnson had accompanied Boswell to Scotland, and had published *A Journey to the Western Isles of Scotland* in 1775. He accompanied his friends the Thrales to Wales in 1774, and to Paris in 1775. He had a kind of second home at the Thrales' house at Streatham, but after Thrale's death and Mrs. Thrale's marriage to an Italian musician named Piozzi, Johnson quarrelled with his benefactress, and was deprived of his old asylum. His health began to decline; he suffered from asthma and gout, and his dropsy became worse. He died on 13th December, 1784, and was buried in Westminster Abbey a week later.

Johnson is perhaps the best-known figure in English literature, and yet his books are seldom read. *Irene* is forgotten; *Rasselas* is considered ponderous; even *The Lives of the Poets* is not appreciated to the full. The great *Dictionary*, a pioneer work in its day, but etymologically valueless, has been superseded. Johnson is a unique example of a man who has been dissociated from his books. He is remembered chiefly as a conversationalist, and owes no small part of his fame to Boswell, the prince of biographers. All competent authorities agree in regarding Boswell's *Life of Johnson* (1791) as the best biography in the English language.

Johnson was a most formidable man to encounter, but he was loved and respected as few other men have been. Underneath his gruff exterior he had a heart as tender as that of any woman. He combined the manners of a street-porter with the morals of a Puritan. He was kind to animals, loved children, and gave liberally to the poor. He gathered round him in his home a curious collection of pensioners, and was long-suffering to a fault with them and their jealous bickerings. Many of Johnson's peculiarities are to be attributed to the state of his health. He was always scrofulous—Queen

Anne had touched him in vain for the King's Evil—and he inherited a melancholic disposition from his father. He had a morbid fear of death. He suffered from a kind of St. Vitus's dance, and had the habit of "touching" so well described by Borrow in *Lavengro* (Chap. LXIII, seqq.). His melancholy made him too exacting with himself, and he was continually reproaching himself with laziness. As a matter of fact, he left a considerable amount of work behind him, though it was his character rather than his work that made him famous. He is an embodiment of his age, for better and for worse. He was a more absolute literary dictator than any who went before him or came after him. Above all, he was the first literary man who fearlessly maintained his complete independence; he was one of the noblest of moralists, and the kindest of benefactors.

[James Boswell's *Life* (Dr. Birkbeck Hill's edition); George Birkbeck Hill, *Dr. Johnson: his Friends and his Critics*; Sir L. Stephen, *Samuel Johnson* (English Men of Letters Series); J. C. Bailey, *Dr. Johnson and his Circle*; Sir Walter Raleigh, *Six Essays on Johnson*; P. H. Houston, *Doctor Johnson, a Study in XVIIIth Century Humanism*; Robert Lynd, *Dr. Johnson and Company*.]

From "The Vanity of Human Wishes"

Where then shall Hope and Fear their objects find?
Must dull suspense corrupt the stagnant mind?
Must helpless man, in ignorance sedate,
Roll darkling down the torrent of his fate?
Must no dislike, alarm, no wishes rise,

No cries invoke the mercies of the skies?
Enquirer, cease; petitions yet remain
Which Heaven may hear, nor deem Religion vain.
Still raise for good the supplicating voice,
But leave to Heaven the measure and the choice.
Safe in his power, whose eyes discern afar
The secret ambush of a specious prayer;
Implore his aid, in his decisions rest,
Secure, whate'er he gives, he gives the best.
Yet, when the sense of sacred presence fires,
And strong devotion to the skies aspires,
Pour forth thy fervours for a healthful mind,
Obedient passions and a will resign'd;
For love, which scarce collective man can fill;
For patience, sovereign o'er transmuted ill;
For faith, that, panting for a happier seat,
Counts death kind Nature's signal of retreat.
These goods for man the laws of Heaven ordain,
These goods he grants, who grants the power to gain.
With these celestial Wisdom calms the mind,
And makes the happiness she does not find.

From "Rasselas"

CHAPTER VI

A Dissertation on the Art of Flying

Among the artists that had been allured into the happy valley, to labour for the accommodation and pleasure of its inhabitants, was a man eminent for his knowledge of the mechanic powers, who had contrived many engines both of use and recreation. By a wheel which the stream turned, he forced the water into a tower, whence it was distributed to all the apartments of the palace. He erected a pavilion in the garden, around which he kept the air always cool by artificial showers. One of the groves, appropriated to the ladies, was ventilated by fans, to which the rivulets that ran through it gave a constant motion; and instruments of soft music were played at proper distances, of which some played by the impulse of the wind, and some by the power of the stream.

This artist was sometimes visited by Rasselas, who was pleased with every kind of knowledge, imagining that the time would come when all his acquisitions should be of use to him in the open world. He came one day to amuse himself in his usual manner, and found the master busy in

building a sailing chariot; he saw that the design was practicable upon a level surface, and with expressions of great esteem solicited its completion. The workman was pleased to find himself so much regarded by the prince, and resolved to gain yet higher honours. "Sir," said he, "you have seen but a small part of what the mechanic sciences can perform. I have been long of opinion, that instead of the tardy conveyance of ships and chariots, man might use the swifter migration of wings; that the fields of air are open to knowledge, and that only ignorance and idleness need crawl upon the ground."

This hint rekindled the prince's desire of passing the mountains. Having seen what the mechanist had already performed, he was willing to fancy that he could do more; yet resolved to inquire farther before he suffered hope to afflict him by disappointment. "I am afraid," said he to the artist, "that your imagination prevails over your skill, and that you now tell me rather what you wish than what you know. Every animal has his element assigned him; the birds have the air, and man and beasts the earth."—"So," replied the mechanist, "fishes have the water, in which yet beasts can swim by nature, and man by art. He that can swim needs not despair to fly: to swim is to fly in a grosser fluid, and to fly is to swim in a subtler. We are only to proportion our power of resistance to the different density of matter through which we are to pass. You will be necessarily upborne by the air, if you can renew any impulse upon it faster than the air can recede from the pressure."

"But the exercise of swimming," said the prince, "is very laborious: the strongest limbs are soon wearied: I am afraid the act of flying will be yet more violent; and wings will be of no great use, unless we can fly further than we can swim."

"The labour of rising from the ground," said the artist, "will be great, as we see it in the heavier domestic fowls; but, as we mount higher, the earth's attraction, and the body's gravity, will be gradually diminished, till we shall arrive at a region where the man shall float in the air without any tendency to fall; no care will then be necessary but to move forward, which the gentlest impulse will effect. You, Sir, whose curiosity is so extensive, will easily conceive with what pleasure a philosopher, furnished with wings, and hovering in the sky, would see the earth, and all its inhabitants, rolling beneath him, and presenting to him successively, by its diurnal motion, all the countries within the same parallel. How must it amuse the pendent spectator to see the moving scene of land and ocean, cities and deserts! to survey with equal security the marts of trade, and the fields of battle; mountains infested by barbarians, and fruitful regions gladdened by plenty and lulled by peace! How easily shall we then trace the Nile through all his passages, pass over to distant regions, and examine the face of nature from one extremity of the earth to the other."

"All this," said the prince, "is much to be desired, but I am afraid

that no man will be able to breathe in these regions of speculation and tranquillity. I have been told that respiration is difficult upon lofty mountains; yet from these precipices, though so high as to produce great tenuity of air, it is very easy to fall: therefore I suspect, that from any height, where life can be supported, there may be danger of too quick descent."

"Nothing," replied the artist, "will ever be attempted, if all possible objections must be first overcome. If you will favour my project, I will try the first flight at my own hazard. I have considered the structure of all volant animals, and find the folding continuity of the bat's wings most easily accommodated to the human form. Upon this model I shall begin my task to-morrow; and, in a year, expect to tower into the air beyond the malice and pursuit of man. But I will work only on this condition, that the art shall not be divulged, and that you shall not require me to make wings for any but ourselves."

"Why," said Rasselas, "should you envy others so great an advantage? All skill ought to be exerted for universal good; every man has owed much to others, and ought to repay the kindness that he has received."

"If men were all virtuous," returned the artist, "I should with great alacrity teach them to fly. But what would be the security of the good if the bad could at pleasure invade them from the sky? Against an army sailing through the clouds, neither walls, mountains, nor seas, could afford security. A flight of northern savages might hover in the wind, and light with irresistible violence upon the capital of a fruitful region. Even this valley, the retreat of princes, the abode of happiness, might be violated by the sudden descent of some of the naked nations that swarm on the coast of the southern sea!"

The prince promised secrecy, and waited for the performance, not wholly hopeless of success. He visited the work from time to time, observed its progress, and remarked many ingenious contrivances to facilitate motion, and unite levity with strength. The artist was every day more certain that he should leave vultures and eagles behind him, and the contagion of his confidence seized upon the prince. In a year the wings were finished; and, on a morning appointed, the maker appeared furnished for flight on a little promontory; he waved his pinions a while to gather air, then leaped from his stand, and in an instant dropped into the lake. His wings, which were of no use in the air, sustained him in the water; and the prince drew him to land, half dead with terror and vexation.

From the Preface to the “English Dictionary”

In hope of giving longevity to that which its own nature forbids to be immortal, I have devoted this book, the labour of years, to the honour of my country, that we may no longer yield the palm of philology, without a contest, to the nations of the continent. The chief glory of every people arises from its authors: whether I shall add any things by my own writings to the reputation of English literature, must be left to time: much of my life has been lost under the pressures of disease; much has been trifled away; and much has always been spent in provision for the day that was passing over me; but I shall not think my employment useless or ignoble, if by my assistance foreign nations and distant ages gain access to the propagators of knowledge, and understand the teachers of truth; if my labours afford light to the repositories of science, and add celebrity to Bacon, to Hooker, to Milton, and to Boyle.

When I am animated by this wish, I look with pleasure on my book, however defective, and deliver it to the world with the spirit of a man that has endeavoured well. That it will immediately become popular, I have not promised to myself; a few wild blunders, and risible absurdities, from which no work of such multiplicity was ever free, may for a time furnish folly with laughter, and harden ignorance into contempt; but useful diligence will at last prevail, and there never can be wanting some who distinguish desert; who will consider that no dictionary of a living tongue ever can be perfect, since, while it is hastening to publication, some words are budding, and some falling away; that a whole life cannot be spent upon syntax and etymology, and that even a whole life would not be sufficient; that he, whose design includes whatever language can express, must often speak of what he does not understand; that a writer will sometimes be hurried by eagerness to the end, and sometimes faint with weariness under a task, which Scaliger compares to the labours of the anvil and the mine; that what is obvious is not always known, and what is known is not always present; that sudden fits of inadvertency will surprise vigilance, slight avocations will seduce attention, and casual eclipses of the mind will darken learning; and that the writer shall often in vain trace his memory at the moment of need, for that which yesterday he knew with intuitive readiness, and which will come uncalled into his thoughts to-morrow.

In this work, when it shall be found that much is omitted, let it not be forgotten that much likewise is performed; and though no book was ever spared out of tenderness to the author, and the world is little solicitous to know whence proceed the faults of that which it condemns; yet it may

gratify curiosity to inform it, that the "English Dictionary" was written with little assistance of the learned, and without any patronage of the great; not in the soft obscurities of retirement, or under the shelter of academic bowers, but amidst inconvenience and distraction, in sickness and in sorrow. It may repress the triumph of malignant criticism to observe, that if our language is not here fully displayed, I have only failed in an attempt which no human powers have hitherto completed. If the lexicons of ancient tongues, now immutably fixed, and comprised in a few volumes, be yet, after the toil of successive ages, inadequate and delusive; if the aggregated knowledge and co-operating diligence of the Italian academicians, did not secure them from the censure of Beni; if the embodied critics of France, when fifty years had been spent upon their work, were obliged to change its economy, and give their second edition another form, I may surely be contented without the praise of perfection, which, if I could obtain, in this gloom of solitude, what would it avail me? I have protracted my work till most of those whom I wished to please have sunk into the grave, and success and miscarriage are empty sounds; I therefore dismiss it with frigid tranquillity, having little to fear or hope from censure or from praise.

From "A Journey to the Western Isles"

We were now treading that illustrious island, which was once the luminary of the Caledonian regions, whence savage clans and roving barbarians derived the benefits of knowledge, and the blessings of religion. To abstract the mind from all local emotion would be impossible, if it were endeavoured, and would be foolish, if it were possible. Whatever withdraws us from the power of our senses; whatever makes the past, the distant, or the future predominate over the present, advances us in the dignity of thinking beings. Far from me and from my friends be such frigid philosophy, as may conduct us indifferent and unmoved over any ground which has been dignified by wisdom, bravery, or virtue. That man is little to be envied, whose patriotism would not gain force upon the plain of Marathon, or whose piety would not grow warmer among the ruins of Iona.

A Letter to Mr. Macpherson

MR. JAMES MACPHERSON,—I received your foolish and impudent letter. Any violence offered me I shall do my best to repel; and what I cannot do for myself, the law shall do for me. I hope I never shall be deterred from detecting what I think a cheat, by the menaces of a ruffian.

What would you have me retract? I thought your book an imposture; I think it an imposture still. For this opinion I have given my reasons to the public; which I here dare you to refute. Your rage I defy. Your abilities, since your Homer, are not so formidable; and what I hear of your morals inclines me to pay regard not to what you shall say, but to what you shall prove. You may print this if you will.

SAM: JOHNSON.

From "The Lives of the Poets"

LIFE OF COLLINS

William Collins was born at Chichester on the twenty-fifth of December, about 1720. His father was a hatter of good reputation. He was in 1733, as Dr. Warton has kindly informed me, admitted scholar of Winchester College, where he was educated by Dr. Burton. His English exercises were better than his Latin.

He first courted the notice of the publick by some verses *To a Lady weeping*, published in the *Gentleman's Magazine*.

In 1740 he stood first in the list of the scholars to be received in succession at New College; but unhappily there was no vacancy. This was the original misfortune of his life. He became a Commoner of Queen's College, probably with a scanty maintenance; but was in about half a year elected a Demy of Magdalen College; where he continued till he had taken a Bachelor's degree, and then suddenly left the University, for what reason I know not that he told.

He now (about 1744) came to London a literary adventurer, with many projects in his head, and very little money in his pocket. He designed many works; but his great fault was irresolution, or the frequent calls of immediate necessity broke his schemes, and suffered him to pursue no settled purpose. A man, doubtful of his dinner, or trembling at a creditor, is not much disposed to abstracted meditation, or remote enquiries. He published proposals for a *History of the Revival of Learning*; and I have heard him speak with great kindness of Leo the Tenth, and with keen resentment of his tasteless successor. But probably not a page of the *History* was ever written. He planned several tragedies, but he only planned them. He wrote now and then odes and other poems, and did something, however little.

About this time I fell into his company. His appearance was decent and manly; his knowledge considerable, his views extensive, his conversation elegant, and his disposition chearful. By degrees I gained his confidence; and one day was admitted to him when he was immured by a bailiff, that was prowling in the street. On this occasion recourse

was had to the booksellers, who, on the credit of a translation of Aristotle's *Poeticks*, which he engaged to write with a large commentary, advanced as much money as enabled him to escape into the country. He shewed me the guineas safe in his hand. Soon afterwards his uncle, Mr. Martin, a lieutenant-colonel, left him about two thousand pounds; a sum which Collins could scarcely think exhaustible, and which he did not live to exhaust. The guineas were then repaid, and the translation neglected.

But man is not born for happiness. Collins, who, while he *studied to live*, felt no evil but poverty, no sooner *lived to study* than his life was assailed by more dreadful calamities, disease and insanity.

Having formerly written his character, while perhaps it was yet more distinctly impressed upon my memory, I shall insert it here.

"Mr. Collins was a man of extensive literature, and of vigorous faculties. He was acquainted not only with the learned tongues, but with the Italian, French, and Spanish languages. He had employed his mind chiefly upon works of fiction, and subjects of fancy; and, by indulging some peculiar habits of thought, was eminently delighted with those flights of imagination which pass the bounds of nature, and to which the mind is reconciled only by a passive acquiescence in popular traditions. He loved fairies, genii, giants, and monsters; he delighted to rove through the meanders of enchantment, to gaze on the magnificence of golden palaces, to repose by the water-falls of Elysian gardens.

"This was however the character rather of his inclination than his genius; the grandeur of wildness, and the novelty of extravagance, were always desired by him, but were not always attained. Yet as diligence is never wholly lost; if his efforts sometimes caused harshness and obscurity, they likewise produced in happier moments sublimity and splendour. This idea which he had formed of excellence, led him to oriental fictions and allegorical imagery; and perhaps, while he was intent upon description, he did not sufficiently cultivate sentiment. His poems are the productions of a mind not deficient in fire, nor unfurnished with knowledge either of books or life, but somewhat obstructed in its progress by deviation in quest of mistaken beauties.

"His morals were pure, and his opinions pious: in a long continuance of poverty, and long habits of dissipation, it cannot be expected that any character should be exactly uniform. There is a degree of want by which the freedom of agency is almost destroyed; and long association with fortuitous companions will at last relax the strictness of truth, and abate the fervour of sincerity. That this man, wise and virtuous as he was, passed always unentangled through the snares of life, it would be prejudice and temerity to affirm; but it may be said that at least he preserved the source of action unpolluted, that his principles were never shaken, that his distinctions of right and wrong were never confounded,

and that his faults had nothing of malignity or design, but proceeded from some unexpected pressure, or casual temptation.

"The latter part of his life cannot be remembered but with pity and sadness. He languished some years under that depression of mind which enchains the faculties without destroying them, and leaves reason the knowledge of right without the power of pursuing it. These clouds which he perceived gathering on his intellects, he endeavoured to disperse by travel, and passed into France; but found himself constrained to yield to his malady, and returned. He was for some time confined in a house of lunatics, and afterwards retired to the care of his sister in Chichester, where death in 1756 came to his relief.

"After his return from France, the writer of this character paid him a visit at Islington, where he was waiting for his sister, whom he had directed to meet him: there was then nothing of disorder discernible in his mind by any but himself; but he had withdrawn from study, and travelled with no other book than an English Testament, such as children carry to the school: when his friend took it into his hand, out of curiosity to see what companion a Man of Letters had chosen, *I have but one book*, said Collins, *but that is the best.*"

Such was the fate of Collins, with whom I once delighted to converse, and whom I yet remember with tenderness.

He was visited at Chichester, in his last illness, by his learned friends Dr. Warton and his brother; to whom he spoke with disapprobation of his *Oriental Eclogues*, as not sufficiently expressive of Asiatick manners, and called them his Irish Eclogues. He shewed them, at the same time, an ode inscribed to Mr. John Hume, on the superstitions of the Highlands; which they thought superior to his other works, but which no search has yet found.

His disorder was not alienation of mind, but general laxity and feebleness, a deficiency rather of his vital than intellectual powers. What he spoke wanted neither judgment nor spirit; but a few minutes exhausted him, so that he was forced to rest upon a couch, till a short cessation restored his powers, and he was again able to talk with his former vigour.

The approaches of this dreadful malady he began to feel soon after his uncle's death; and, with the usual weakness of men so diseased, eagerly snatched that temporary relief with which the table and the bottle flatter and seduce. But his health continually declined, and he grew more and more burdensome to himself.

To what I have formerly said of his writings may be added, that his diction was often harsh, unskilfully laboured, and injudiciously selected. He affected the obsolete when it was not worthy of revival; and he put his words out of the common order, seeming to think, with some later candidates for fame, that not to write prose is certainly to write poetry. His lines commonly are of slow motion, clogged and impeded

with clusters of consonants. As men are often esteemed who cannot be loved, so the poetry of Collins may sometimes extort praise when it gives little pleasure.

Mr. Collins's first production is added here from *The Poetical Calendar*:

*To Miss Aurelia C——r,
On her weeping at her Sister's Wedding*

Cease, fair Aurelia, cease to mourn;
Lament not Hannah's happy state;
You may be happy in your turn,
And seize the treasure you regret.

With Love united Hymen stands,
And softly whispers to your charms:
"Meet but your lover in my bands,
You'll find your sister in his arms."

DAVID HUME

(1711 — 1776)

DAVID HUME was born in Edinburgh on 26th April, 1711. His father was a Berwickshire laird. He was educated at Edinburgh University, and was destined for the law, but was drawn away by his love of literature and philosophy, and retired to France, where during three years of quiet and studious life he composed his *Treatise of Human Nature*. This work was published at London in 1738, but, in his own words, "fell dead-born from the press". His next work, *Essays, Moral and Political* (Edinburgh, 1742), met with a better reception; but in 1744 he applied in vain for the chair of "ethics and pneumatic philosophy" at Edinburgh, his unorthodox opinions proving a stum-

bling-block. In 1745 he became companion to the Marquess of Annandale, a high-grade moron; and he accompanied General St. Clair in 1746 and 1747 on his expedition against France and on a military embassy to Vienna and Turin. He now published a recasting of his *Treatise of Human Nature* in his *Philosophical Essays concerning the Human Understanding* (1748). In 1751 he published his *Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals* and in 1752 his *Political Discourses*, which were well received. In 1752 he failed to secure the chair of logic at Glasgow, but was appointed keeper of the Advocates' Library at Edinburgh, with a salary of only £40 a year, but with access to an ad-

mirable library of thirty thousand volumes. He at once began to write his *History of England*, of which the first volume appeared in 1754. It dealt with the reigns of James I and Charles I; the next volume continued the history to the Revolution; Hume then worked backwards, producing next two volumes on the Tudors (1759), and completing his work with two volumes (1761) which covered the period from Julius Cæsar to Henry VII. The book was fiercely attacked by Whigs for its political and by the devout for its religious tendencies; but, in spite of adverse criticism, it was recognized after its completion as a standard work. Hume is not a trustworthy historian; he had not access to many documents, nor did he make full use of those to which he had access. He was a most determined Tory; when he revised his *History* his chief care was to purge it of every trace of Whiggism, though no eye but his own could see any such trace. Yet his *History* was a work of prime importance, since it was the first English historical work that was readable. Its style is clear and pleasing, its narrative is forceful and dramatic. It would be well if some later and "scientific" historians who condemn Hume's matter had borrowed from him something of his manner. In 1763 he accepted an invitation from the Earl of Hertford, then proceeding as Ambassador to Paris, to accompany him, and was enthusiastically received in Parisian circles in his character of philosopher and historian. After the departure of Lord Hertford in 1765 he remained as chargé d'affaires, and returned to England in 1766, bringing with

him Rousseau, for whom he procured a pension and a retreat in Derbyshire. But the morbid sensitivity of Rousseau brought about a disagreement which put an end to the friendship. In 1767 he was appointed Under-Secretary of State, a post which he held till 1769, when he retired to Edinburgh, where he lived until his death (25th August, 1776).

Hume was a man of a singularly easy and complacent temper. In spite of his extreme political and religious views, he made comparatively few personal enemies, even among English Whigs of unblemished orthodoxy, to whom his opinions were anathema. He was master of an attractive style, and first taught English historians to write in an engaging manner. His *History* was read with nearly as much enjoyment as the novels of Fielding and Richardson. His contribution to philosophy was more solid and more lasting. He continued the line of thought begun by Locke and Berkeley; his acute criticism of their conceptions compelled philosophy either to come to a dead halt, or to find, as Kant did, a new and profounder view of the nature of human reason. He was one of the most influential thinkers of his age, and in many respects is more typical than anyone else of the thought of the middle of the eighteenth century.

[W. Knight, *Hume* (in *Philosophical Classics*); J. Hill Burton, *Life and Correspondence of David Hume*; T. H. Huxley, *Hume* (English Men of Letters Series); J. Seth, *English Philosophers and Schools of Philosophy*.]

From the Essay "Of Miracles"

Upon the whole, then, it appears, that no testimony for any kind of miracle has ever amounted to a probability, much less to a proof; and that, even supposing it amounted to a proof, it would be opposed by another proof, derived from the very nature of the fact which it would endeavour to establish. It is experience only which gives authority to human testimony; and it is the same experience which assures us of the laws of nature. When, therefore, these two kinds of experience are contrary, we have nothing to do but to subtract the one from the other, and embrace an opinion either on one side or the other, with that assurance which arises from the remainder. But according to the principle here explained, this subtraction with regard to all popular religions amounts to an entire annihilation; and therefore we may establish it as a maxim, that no human testimony can have such force as to prove a miracle, and make it a just foundation for any such system of religion.

I beg the limitations here made may be remarked, when I say, that a miracle can never be proved so as to be the foundation of a system of religion. For I own, that otherwise there may possibly be miracles, or violations of the usual course of nature, of such a kind as to admit of proof from human testimony; though perhaps it will be impossible to find any such in all the records of history. Thus, suppose all authors, in all languages, agree, that, from the 1st of January, 1600, there was a total darkness over the whole earth for eight days: suppose that the tradition of this extraordinary event is still strong and lively among the people: that all travellers who return from foreign countries bring us accounts of the same tradition, without the least variation or contradiction: it is evident that our present philosophers, instead of doubting the fact, ought to receive it as certain, and ought to search for the causes whence it might be derived. The decay, corruption, and dissolution of nature, is an event rendered probable by so many analogies, that any phenomenon, which seems to have a tendency towards that catastrophe, comes within the reach of human testimony, if that testimony be very extensive and uniform.

But suppose that all the historians who treat of England should agree, that on the first of January, 1600, Queen Elizabeth died; that both before and after her death, she was seen by her physicians and the whole court, as is usual with persons of her rank; that her successor was acknowledged and proclaimed by the Parliament; and that, after being interred for a month, she again appeared, resumed the throne, and governed England for three years; I must confess that I should be surprised at the concurrence of so many odd circumstances, but should not have the least inclination to believe so miraculous an event. I should not doubt of her pretended death, and of those other public circumstances that followed it: I should

only assert it to have been pretended, and that it neither was, nor possibly could be, real. You would in vain object to me the difficulty, and almost impossibility of deceiving the world in an affair of such consequence; the wisdom and solid judgment of that renowned Queen; with the little or no advantage which she could reap from so poor an artifice: all this might astonish me; but I would still reply, that the knavery and folly of men are such common phenomena, that I should rather believe the most extraordinary events to arise from their concurrence, than admit of so signal a violation of the laws of nature.

But should this miracle be ascribed to any new system of religion; men, in all ages, have been so much imposed on by ridiculous stories of that kind, that this very circumstance would be a full proof of a cheat, and sufficient, with all men of sense, not only to make them reject the fact, but even reject it without further examination. Though the being to whom the miracle is ascribed, be in this case Almighty, it does not, upon that account, become a whit more probable; since it is impossible for us to know the attributes or actions of such a Being, otherwise than from the experience which we have of his productions in the usual course of nature. This still reduces us to past observation, and obliges us to compare the instances of the violation of truth in the testimony of men, with those of the violation of the laws of nature by miracles, in order to judge which of them is most likely and probable. As the violations of truth are more common in the testimony concerning religious miracles than in that concerning any other matter of fact; this must diminish very much the authority of the former testimony, and make us form a general resolution never to lend any attention to it, with whatever specious pretence it may be covered.

Lord Bacon seems to have embraced the same principles of reasoning. "We ought," says he, "to make a collection or particular history of all monsters and prodigious births or productions; and, in a word, of every thing new, rare, and extraordinary in nature. But this must be done with the most severe scrutiny, lest we depart from truth. Above all, every relation must be considered as suspicious which depends in any degree upon religion, as the prodigies of Livy: and no less so every thing that is to be found in the writers on natural magic or alchemy, or such authors who seem all of them to have an unconquerable appetite for falsehood and fable."

I am the better pleased with the method of reasoning here delivered, as I think it may serve to confound those dangerous friends, or disguised enemies to the Christian religion, who have undertaken to defend it by the principles of human reason. Our most holy religion is founded on Faith, not on reason; and it is a sure method of exposing it to put it to such a trial as it is by no means fitted to endure. To make this more evident, let us examine those miracles related in Scripture; and, not to lose ourselves

in too wide a field, let us confine ourselves to such as we find in the Pentateuch, which we shall examine, according to the principles of these pretended Christians, not as the word or testimony of God himself, but as the production of a mere human writer and historian. Here, then, we are first to consider a book, presented to us by a barbarous and ignorant people, written in an age when they were still more barbarous, and, in all probability, long after the facts which it relates, corroborated by no concurring testimony, and resembling those fabulous accounts which every nation gives of its origin. Upon reading this book, we find it full of prodigies and miracles. It gives an account of a state of the world and of human nature entirely different from the present: of our fall from that state: of the age of man, extended to near a thousand years: of the destruction of the world by a deluge: of the arbitrary choice of one people as the favourites of heaven; and that people the countrymen of the author: of their deliverance from bondage by prodigies the most astonishing imaginable. I desire any one to lay his hand upon his heart, and, after a serious consideration, declare whether he thinks that the falsehood of such a book, supported by such a testimony, would be more extraordinary and miraculous than all the miracles it relates; which is, however, necessary to make it be received, according to the measures of probability above established.

What we have said of miracles, may be applied without any variation to prophecies; and, indeed, all prophecies are real miracles, and as such, only can be admitted as proofs of any revelation. If it did not exceed the capacity of human nature to foretell future events, it would be absurd to employ any prophecy as an argument for a divine mission or authority from heaven. So that, upon the whole, we may conclude, that the Christian Religion not only was at first attended with miracles, but even at this day cannot be believed by any reasonable person without one. Mere reason is insufficient to convince us of its veracity: and whoever is moved by Faith to assent to it, is conscious of a continued miracle in his own person, which subverts all the principles of his understanding, and gives him a determination to believe what is most contrary to custom and experience.

WILLIAM ROBERTSON

(1721 - 1793)

WILLIAM ROBERTSON was born on 19th September, 1721, at Borthwick, Midlothian, where his father was parish minister. He was educated

at Dalkeith Grammar School and at Edinburgh University, which he entered at the age of twelve. He was licensed to preach in 1741,

and two years later was presented to the living of Gladsmuir. In 1745 both his parents died within a week, and he undertook the education of his sisters and a younger brother, though his income was less than £100 a year. In the same year he volunteered to serve against the Pretender, but his offer of his services was refused. In 1753 he commenced to write his *History*; it appeared in 1759 with the title *History of Scotland during the Reigns of Queen Mary and of King James VI. till his Accession to the Crown of England. With a Review of the Scotch History previous to that Period*. Its success was extraordinary and instantaneous, nor was it unmerited. Its style, though somewhat formal, is lucid, polished, and pleasant to read. Robertson was by no means remiss in the matter of research, but the available material was scanty. He made excellent use of the material which was to hand. His fame as a historian was at once firmly established, nor were more solid rewards slow to come his way. He became chaplain of Stirling Castle (1759), minister of the Old Greyfriars, Edinburgh, and chaplain to the king (1761), Principal of Edinburgh University (1762), and Historiographer Royal for Scotland (1763). In 1763 he was elected Moderator of the General Assembly. His influence on ecclesiastical matters, which was profound, was always employed on the side of moderation and common sense. The chief events of the rest of his life were the publications of his other historical works. His best work,

The History of the Reign of Charles V., appeared in 1769. By it he made the extraordinary sum of £4500. The preliminary *View of the Progress of Society from the subversion of the Roman Empire to the beginning of the sixteenth century* is an able piece of work, in which Robertson showed his talent for successfully handling general ideas. *The History of America*, a vivid and attractive book, appeared in 1777. Robertson's last work, his *Historical Disquisition concerning the Knowledge which the Ancients had of India*, appeared in 1792. He died of jaundice on 11th June, 1793.

Robertson is, of course, no longer read as an authority. Since he wrote many new facts have been discovered about the periods he treated, and many new documents are available as sources. His work is thus in a sense obsolete, but it may still be admired for its skilful and luminous arrangement, distinctness of narrative, and highly graphical descriptions. His influence is by no means extinct, as he was one of the earliest of British historians, and has inspired some of his successors to write with eloquence and candour. His style is pure, dignified, and perspicuous, and, though over-anxiety to avoid Scotticisms has made him too formal, he never forgot, as too many historians have done, that Clio was one of the nine muses. Considering that he wrote nothing but history, it is curious that he made more money by his writings than any British author of his century.

From "The History of Scotland"

But it is not on suspicion alone, that Mary is charged with dissimulation in this part of her conduct. Two of her famous letters to Bothwell were written during her stay at Glasgow, and fully lay open this scene of iniquity. He had so far succeeded in his ambitious and criminal design, as to gain an absolute ascendant over the queen; and, in a situation such as Mary's, merit not so conspicuous, services of far inferior importance, and address much less insinuating than Bothwell's, may be supposed to steal imperceptibly on a female heart, and entirely to overcome it. Unhappily, among those in the higher ranks of life, scruples with regard to conjugal fidelity, are, often, neither many nor strong: nor did the manners of that court, in which Mary had been educated, contribute to increase or to fortify them. The amorous turn of Francis I. and Henry II., the licentiousness of the military character of that age, and the liberty of appearing in all companies, which began to be allowed to women, who had not yet acquired that delicacy of sentiment, and those polished manners, which alone can render this liberty innocent, had introduced, among the French, an astonishing relaxation in domestic morals. Such examples, which were familiar to Mary from her infancy, could hardly fail of diminishing that horror of vice which is natural to a virtuous mind. The king's behaviour would render the first approach of forbidden sentiments less shocking; resentment, and disappointed love, would be apt to represent whatever soothed her revenge, as justifiable on that account; and so many concurring causes might, almost imperceptibly, kindle a new passion in her heart.

But, whatever opinion we may form with regard to the rise and progress of this passion, the letters themselves breathe all the ardour and tenderness of love. The affection which Mary there expresses for Bothwell, fully accounts for every subsequent part of her conduct; which, without admitting this circumstance, appears altogether mysterious, inconsistent, and inexplicable. That reconciliation with her husband, of which, if we allow it to be genuine, it is impossible to give any plausible account, is discovered, by the queen's own confession, to have been mere artifice and deceit. As her aversion for her husband, and the suspicious attention with which she observed his conduct, became universally known, her ears were officiously filled, as is usual in such cases, with groundless or aggravated accounts of his actions. By some she was told, that the king intended to seize the person of the prince his son, and in his name to usurp the government; by others she was assured that he resolved instantly to leave the kingdom; that a vessel was hired for this purpose, and lay in the river Clyde ready to receive him. The last was what Mary chiefly dreaded. Henry's retiring into a foreign country must have been highly

dishonourable to the queen, and would have entirely disconcerted Bothwell's measures. While he resided at Glasgow, at a distance from her, and in that part of the kingdom where the interest of his family was greatest, he might with more facility accomplish his designs. In order, therefore, to prevent his executing any such wild scheme, it was necessary to bring him to some place where he would be immediately under her own eye. For this purpose, she first employed all her art to regain his confidence, and then proposed to remove him to the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, under pretence that there he would have easier access to the advice of physicians, and that she herself could attend him without being absent from her son. The king was weak enough to suffer himself to be persuaded; and being still feeble, and incapable of bearing fatigue, was carried in a litter to Edinburgh.

The place prepared for his reception was a house belonging to the provost of a collegiate church, called Kirk of Field. It stood almost upon the same spot where the house belonging to the principal of the university now stands. Such a situation, on a rising ground, and at that time in an open field, had all the advantages of healthful air to recommend it; but, on the other hand, the solitude of the place rendered it extremely proper for the commission of that crime, with a view to which it seems manifestly to have been chosen.

Mary continued to attend the king with the most assiduous care. She seldom was absent from him through the day; she slept two nights in the chamber under his apartment. She heaped on him so many marks of tenderness and confidence as in a great measure quieted those suspicions which had so long disturbed him. But while he was fondly indulging in dreams of the return of his former happiness, he stood on the very brink of destruction. On Sunday the ninth of February, about eleven at night, the queen left the Kirk of Field, in order to be present at a masque in the palace. At two next morning, the house in which the king lay was blown up with gunpowder. The noise and shock which this sudden explosion occasioned, alarmed the whole city. The inhabitants ran to the place whence it came. The dead body of the king, with that of a servant who slept in the same room, were found lying in an adjacent garden without the city wall, untouched by fire, and with no bruise or mark of violence.

Such was the unhappy fate of Henry Stewart, Lord Darnley, in the twenty-first year of his age. The indulgence of fortune, and his own external accomplishments, without any other merit, had raised him to an height of dignity of which he was altogether unworthy. By his folly and ingratitude, he lost the heart of a woman who doated on him to distraction. His insolence and inconstancy alienated from him such of the nobles as had contributed most zealously towards his elevation. His levity and caprice exposed him to the scorn of the people, who once revered him as the descendant of their ancient kings and heroes. Had he died a natural

death, his end would have been unlamented, and his memory have been forgotten; but the cruel circumstances of his murder, and the shameful remissness in neglecting to avenge it, have made his name to be remembered with regret, and have rendered him the object of pity, to which he had otherwise no title.

(From *Book IV.*)

JOHN WESLEY

(1703 – 1791)

JOHN WESLEY was born at Epworth, Lincolnshire, on 17th June, 1703. His father was rector of Epworth. Wesley was educated at Charterhouse and at Christ Church, Oxford, where he graduated B.A. in 1724. He was ordained deacon in 1725; became a fellow of Lincoln College, and lecturer and moderator in classics in 1726; and took priest's orders in 1728. He was a man of great bodily and mental vigour, and took a delight in simple pleasures, such as riding, shooting, and dancing. At Oxford he gathered together a number of pupils and companions who met regularly for religious purposes, and by so doing acquired the name of Methodists. In 1735 Wesley accepted an invitation from General Oglethorpe to go out to America to preach to the colonists of Georgia. His mission was scarcely even moderately successful, and after a stay of two years he returned to England. At 8.45 p.m. on 24th May, 1738, he was converted, and confessed his belief that Christ had taken away his sins. In June of that year he paid a visit to Herrnhut, the Moravian settlement, returning to England in September. Early in the following year (1739) he began open-air

preaching, in which he was closely associated with George Whitefield (q.v.), from whom, however, he soon separated, but without a permanent personal breach. Having now the sole control of the religious body which adhered to him, he devoted his entire life without intermission to the work of its organization, in which he showed much practical skill and admirable method. His labours as an itinerant preacher were incessant. He would ride from 40 to 60 miles in a day. He read or wrote during his journeys, and frequently preached four or five times a day. It is believed that he preached 40,000 sermons and travelled 250,000 miles in his ministry of half a century. He crossed the Irish Channel forty-two times. In spite of these almost incredible activities, he found time for much literary work of a humble kind, preparing grammars of five languages, a textbook of logic, extracts from the Latin classics, various dictionaries and history-books, a library of theological writers, and an abridged edition of Brooke's *Fool of Quality*. He also contributed to the collection of hymns, the greater part of which was written by his brother Charles.

His chief contribution to literature, however, is his famous *Journal*, which covers the years 1735 to 1790, and which is one of the world's great books. It is plain and straightforward in its style, and throws much light not only upon the extremely attractive character of its author, but upon the social history of the eighteenth

century. Wesley died on 2nd March, 1791.

[N. Curnock, *Wesley's Journal*; W. H. Fitchett, *Wesley and his Century*; F. J. Snell, *Wesley and Methodism*; R. Southey, *Life of Wesley*; C. T. Winchester, *Life of John Wesley*; W. H. Hutton, *John Wesley*.]

From the "Journal"

Sun. 8 (April 1781).

The service was at the usual hours. I came just in time to put a stop to a bad custom, which was creeping in here; a few men who had fine voices, sung a psalm which no one knew, in a tune fit for an opera, wherein three, four, or five persons, sung different words at the same time! What an insult upon common sense! What a burlesque upon public worship! No custom can excuse such a mixture of profaneness and absurdity.

Mon. 9.

Desiring to be in Ireland as soon as possible, I hastened to Liverpool, and found a ship ready to sail; but the wind was contrary, till on Thursday morning the Captain came in haste, and told us the wind was come quite fair. So Mr. Floyd, Snowden, Joseph Bradford, and I, with two of our sisters, went on board; but scarce were we out at sea, when the wind turned quite foul, and rose higher and higher. In an hour I was so affected, as I had not been for forty years before. For two days I could not swallow the quantity of a pea, of any thing solid, and very little of any liquid. I was bruised and sore from head to foot, and ill able to turn me on the bed. All Friday, the storm increasing, the sea, of consequence, was rougher and rougher. Early on Saturday morning the hatches were closed, which, together with the violent motion, made our horses so turbulent, that I was afraid we must have killed them, lest they should damage the ship. Mrs. S. now crept to me, threw her arms over me, and said, "O, Sir, we will die together!" We had by this time three feet of water in the hold, though it was an exceeding light vessel. Meantime we were furiously driving on a lee shore; and when the Captain cried, "Helm a lee," she would not obey the helm. I called our brethren to prayers, and we found free access to the throne of grace. Soon after we got, I know not how, into Holyhead Harbour, after being sufficiently buffeted by the winds and waves for two days and two nights.

The more I considered, the more I was convinced, it was not the will

of God I should go to Ireland at this time. So we went into the stage-coach without delay, and the next evening came to Chester.

I now considered, in what place I could spend a few days to the greatest advantage? I soon thought of the Isle of Man, and those parts of Wales which I could not well see in my ordinary course. I judged it would be best to begin with the latter. So after a short day or two's rest, on Wednesday 18th, I set out for Brecon, purposing to take Whitchurch, (where I had not been for many years) and Shrewsbury in my way. At noon I preached in Whitchurch, to a numerous and very serious audience; in the evening at Shrewsbury; where, seeing the earnestness of the people, I agreed to stay another day.

Here I read over Sir Richard Hill's Letter to Mr. Madan, on his defence of Polygamy. I think it is home to the point, and wish always to write (if I must write controversy) in just such a spirit.

Not knowing the best way from hence to Brecon, I thought well to go round by Worcester. I took Broseley in my way, and thereby had a view of the iron bridge over the Severn: I suppose the first and the only one in Europe. It will not soon be imitated.

In the evening, I preached at Broseley; and on Saturday, 21st, went on to Worcester. I found one of our Preachers, Joseph Cole, there; but unable to preach through his ague. So that I could not have come more opportunely.

Sun. 22.

I preached at seven in our own room. At three, the service began at St. Andrew's. As no notice had been given of my preaching there, only as we walked along the street, it was supposed the congregation would be small; but it was far otherwise. High and low, rich and poor, flocked together from all parts of the city; and truly God spoke in his word; so that I believe most of them were "almost persuaded to be Christians". Were it only for this hour alone, the pains of coming to Worcester would have been well bestowed.

Mon. 23.

Being informed it was fifty miles to Brecknock, we set out early; but on trial, we found they were computed miles. However, taking fresh horses at the Hay, I just reached it in time, finding a large company waiting.

Wed. 25.

I set out for Carmarthen; but Joseph Bradford was so ill, that, after going six miles, I left him at a friend's house, and went on by myself. I came in good time to Carmarthen, and enforced those solemn words on a serious congregation, "Now he commandeth all men every where to repent".

Thurs. 26.

I went on to Pembroke, and in the evening preached in the Town-Hall.

Frid. 27.

I preached at Jefferson, seven miles from Pembroke, to a large congregation of honest colliers. In the evening, I preached in Pembroke Town-Hall again, to an elegant congregation; and afterwards met the Society, reduced to a fourth part of its ancient number; but as they are now all in peace and love with each other, I trust they will increase again.

Sat. 28.

We had, in the evening, the most solemn opportunity which I have had since we came into Wales; and the Society seemed all alive, and resolved to be altogether Christians.

THOMAS AMORY

(? 1691 – 1788)

THOMAS AMORY was a native of Ireland. His father went over there with William of Orange, and was made secretary for the forfeited estates. Very little is known of Amory's life; he was living in Westminster in 1757. His life was that of a recluse; he had a peculiar appearance, and hardly ever went out except "like a bat in the dusk of the evening". He died at the great age of ninety-seven on 25th November, 1788. Some of his detractors have called him insane, but probably he was merely eccentric to an unusual degree.

His two books, which are quite as eccentric as himself, are (1) *Memoirs: containing the Lives of Several Ladies of Great Britain, A History of Antiquities, Productions of Nature and Monuments of Art. Observations on the Christian Religion, as professed by the Established Church, and Dissenters of every Denomination. Remarks on the*

Writings of the greatest English Divines: with a Variety of Disquisitions and Opinions relative to Criticism and Manners; and many extraordinary Actions (1755), and (2) *The Life of John Bunce, Esq.* (1756 and 1766). The first of these is quite and the second almost unreadable as a whole, but there are admirable passages even in the *Memoirs*; while *John Bunce* has found many enthusiastic admirers, of whom the chief was Hazlitt. Hazlitt, indeed, went so far as to say that the soul of Rabelais passed into Amory; but he did not persuade anyone else to believe in this metempsychosis. Amory (like Bunce) was a stanch Unitarian, with an enormous zest for life; his book is a curious mixture of fiction and autobiography, of theological discussions and descriptions of scenery, of philosophical debates and enthusiastic accounts of food and drink, written by one who

agrees with Sir Andrew Aguecheek that life consists, not of the four elements, but rather of eating and drinking. John Bunclie, who marries seven wives in succession, is, like his creator, a speculator in almost every subject of interest. As Hazlitt says, he "is a great philosopher, mathematician, anatomist, chemist, philologist, and divine, with a good appetite, the best spirits, and an amorous constitution, who sets out on a series of strange adventures

to propagate his philosophy, his divinity, and his species, and meets with a constant succession of accomplished females, adorned with equal beauty, wit, and virtue, who are always ready to discuss all kinds of theoretical and practical points with him". Amory's long-winded tale is certainly extravagant, but its long-windedness is redeemed by its common sense, and its extravagance by its spontaneity.

From "Memoirs Containing the Lives of Several Ladies of Great Britain"

As I travelled once in the month of September, over a wild part of Yorkshire, and fancied in the afternoon that I was near the place I intended to rest at, it appeared, from a great water we came to, that we had for half a day being going wrong, and were many a mile from any village. This was vexatious; but what was worse, the winds began to blow outrageously, the clouds gathered, and, as the evening advanced, the rain came down like water-spouts from the heavens. All the good that offered was the ruins of a nunnery, within a few yards of the water, and among the walls, once sacred to devotion, a part of an arch that was enough to shelter us and our beasts from the floods and tempest. Into this we entered, the horses, and Moses, and his master, and for some hours were right glad to be so lodged. But, at last, the storm and rain were quite over, we saw the fair rising moon hang up her ready lamp, and with mild lustre drive back the hovering shades. Out then I came from the cavern, and as I walked for a while on the banks of the fine lake, I saw a handsome little boat, with two oars, in a creek; and concluded very justly, that there must be some habitation not far from one side or other of the water. Into the boat therefore we went, having secured our horses, and began to row round, the better to discover. Two hours we were at it as hard as we could labour, and then came to the bottom of a garden, which had a flight of stairs leading up to it. These I ascended. I walked on, and, at the farther end of the fine improved spot, came to a mansion. I immediately knocked at a door, sent in my story to the lady of the house, as there was no master, and in a few minutes was shown into a parlour. I continued alone about a quarter of an hour, and then entered a lady, who struck me into amazement. She was a beauty, of whom I had been passionately fond when she was fourteen and I sixteen

years of age. I saw her first in a French family of distinction, where my father had lodged me for the same reason as her parents had placed her there; that is, for the sake of the purity of the French tongue; and as she had a rational generosity of heart, and an understanding that was surprisingly luminous for her years; could construe an Ode of Horace in a manner the most delightful, and read a chapter in the Greek Testament with great ease every morning; she soon became my heart's fond idol; she appeared in my eyes as something more than mortal. I thought her a divinity. Books furnished us with an occasion of being often together, and we fancied the time was happily spent. But at once she disappeared. As she had a vast fortune, and as there was a suspicion of an *amour*, she was snatched away in a moment, and for twenty years from the afternoon she vanished, I could not see her or hear of her; whether living or dead, I knew not till the night I am speaking of, that I saw come into the room, the lovely Julia Desborough transformed into Mrs. Mort. Our mutual surprise was vastly great. We could not speak for some time. We knew each other as well as if it had been but an hour ago we parted, so strong was the impression made. She was still divinely fair; but I wondered she could remember me so well, as time and many shaking rubs had altered me very greatly for the worse. See how strangely things are brought about! Miss Desborough was removed all the way to Italy, kept many years abroad that she might never see me more, and in the character of Mrs. Mort, by accident, I found her in solitude in the same country I lived in, and still my friend. This lady told me, she had buried an admirable husband a few years ago, and, as she never had any liking to the world, she devoted her time to books, her old favourites, the education of her daughter, and the salvation of her soul. Miss Mort and she lived like two friends. They read and spun some hours of their time every day away. They had a few agreeable neighbours, and from the lake and cultivation of their gardens derived a variety of successive pleasures. They had no relish for the tumultuous pleasures of the town: but in the charms of letters and religion, the philosophy of flowers, the converse of their neighbours, a linen manufactory, and their rural situation, were as happy as their wishes could rise to in this hemisphere. All this to me was like a vision. I wondered, I admired. Is this Miss Desborough with whom I was wont to pass so many hours in reading Milton to her, or *Telemaque*, or *L'Acare de Molière*? What a fleeting scene is life! But a little while, and we go on to another world. Fortunate are they who are fit for the remove, who have a clear conception of the precariousness and vanity of all human things, and by virtue and piety so strive to act what is fairest and most laudable, and so pass becomingly through this life, that they may in the next obtain the blessed and immortal abodes prepared for those who can give up their account with joy.

HENRY BROOKE

(? 1703 - 1783)

HENRY BROOKE was born in County Cavan about 1703. His father was rector of Killinkere, and his mother the daughter of the Bishop of Elphin. He was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, and afterwards studied law at the Temple. He did not persevere with his legal career, but was on friendly terms with Swift, Pope, Lyttelton, and Garrick, and became a man of letters. Most of his life was spent in or near Dublin. His poem, *Universal Beauty*, was published in 1735; his tragedy, *Gustavus Vasa*, was prohibited by the Lord Chamberlain in 1737, on account of its political innuendoes. Brooke, it may be added, was an admirer of Frederick, Prince of Wales. The play, renamed *The Patriot*, was performed in Dublin, where the Chamberlain's prohibition was of no effect. Other plays of small importance followed; schemes for a volume of Irish tales and an Irish history proved abortive; but the publication of some anti-Jacobite pamphlets in 1745 secured for Brooke the post of barrack-master at Mullingar, with a salary of £400 a year. His one work of

permanent interest, *The Fool of Quality; or the History of Henry, Earl of Moreland*, was published between 1766 and 1770. A very inferior novel, *Juliet Grenville*, appeared in 1774. Brooke's life was embittered by the loss of his wife and of twenty-one of his twenty-two children, and in his old age he was the victim of a kind of dementia. He died on 10th October, 1783.

The Fool of Quality is nominally a novel, but it is so badly constructed that it scarcely deserves the name. It is in fact one of the earliest pedagogic novels in English. (Rousseau's *Émile* appeared in 1762.) Its good qualities are its simple style, its shrewd humour, and its universal but not impracticable philanthropy. Even its moral tirades have their attractive qualities. Its weak points are its invertebrate construction and its naïve distribution of rewards and punishments according to merit. It made a special appeal to Methodists, and was condensed by Wesley himself in 1781. Charles Kingsley wrote an enthusiastic introduction for a reprint of 1859.

The Fool of Quality

FROM CHAPTER VI

About a month before this, Mr. Fenton had engaged one Mr. Vindex, the schoolmaster of the town, to come for an hour every evening, and initiate the two boys in their Latin grammar. But he had a special caution given him with respect to the generous disposition of our hero, which was said to be induced to do any thing by kindness; but to be hardened and roused into opposition by severity.

In about ten days after the late adventure, Mr. Fenton was called to London, where he was detained about three weeks, in settling his books with his Dutch correspondents, and in calling in a very large arrear of interest that was due to him upon his deposits in the funds.

During his absence, Mr. Vindex began to assume a more expanded authority, and gave a free scope to the surly terrors of his station.

Ned was by nature a very lively, but very petulant boy; and when Vindex reproved him with the imperial brow and voice of the Great Mogul, Ned cast upon him an eye of such significant contempt, as no submissions or sufferings, on the part of the offender, could ever after compensate.

The next day Mr. Vindex returned, doubly armed, with a monstrous birch-rod in one hand, and a ferule in the other. The first he hung up, *in terrorem*, as a meteor is said to hang in the heavens, threatening future castigation to the children of men. The second he held as determined upon present action, nor was he unmindful of any hook whereon to hang a fault, so that, travelling from right to left and from left to right, he so warmed the hands of the unfortunate Edward, as ruined the sunny economy of his countenance, and reduced him to a disagreeable partnership with the afflicted.

On the departure of Vindex, though Ned's drollery was dismayed, his resentment was by no means eradicated; for the principle of Ned was wholly agreeable to the motto of a very noble escutcheon; and *Nemo me impune lacessit* was a maxim of whose impropriety not St. Anthony himself could persuade him.

All night he lay ruminating and brooding on mischief in his imagination; and having formed the outlines of his plan toward morning, he began to chuckle and comfort himself, and exult in the execution. He then revealed his project to his bedfellow, Mr. James, who was greatly tickled therewith, and promised to join in the plot.

Full against the portal that opened upon the school-room, there stood an ancient and elevated chair, whose form was sufficiently expressive of its importance. Mr. Vindex had selected this majestic piece of furniture as alone suitable to the dignity of his exalted station; for he judiciously considered that, if thrones and benches were taken from among men, there would be an end of all dominion and justice upon earth.

Through the centre of the seat of this chair of authority, Ned got Mr. James to drill a small hole, not discernible except on a very minute scrutiny. He then provided a cylindrical stick of about six inches in length, to one end of which he fastened a piece of lead, and in the other end he fixed the end of a large needle. This needle had been a glover's, of approved metal, keen and polished, and three-square toward the point, for a quick and ready penetration of tough leather. He next fastened two small cords transversely to the leaden extremity of the stick; and, James assisting,

they turned the chair with the bottom upward, and tacked the four ends of the cords in such a manner as answered to the four cardinal points of the compass; while the stick remained suspended in an upward direction, with the point of the needle just so far through the drill, as put it upon a level with the surface of the seat. Lastly, they fastened a long and well-waxed thread about the middle of the stick, and drawing this thread over the upper rung, they dropped the end of it just under Ned's stool, and replaced the seat of learning in its former position.

Greatly did Ned parade it, when on trial he found that his machine answered to a miracle; for the stick being restrained from any motion, save that in a direction to the zenith, on the slightest twitch of the thread the needle instantly mounted four-sixths of two inches above the surface of the seat, and was quickly recalled by the revulsion of the lead.

At the appointed hour of magisterial approach, in comes Mr. Vindex. Master Harry and Ned are called. Each seizes his book, and takes his seat as usual in a line, nearly diagonal to the right and left corner of the chair of authority. Mr. Vindex assumes the throne; but scarce was he crowned when Ned gives the premeditated intimation to his piercer, and up bounces Vindex, and gives two or three capers as though he had been suddenly stung by a tarantula. He stares wildly about—puts his hand behind him with a touch of tender condolence—returns to the chair—peers all over it with eyes of the most prying inspection; but, not trusting to the testimony of his ocular sense in a case that so very feelingly refuted its evidence, he moved his fingers over and over every part of the surface; but found all smooth and fair, in spite of the late sensible demonstration to the contrary.

Down again, with slow caution, subsided Mr. Vindex, reconnoitring the premises to the right hand and to the left.

As his temper was not now in the most dulcet disposition, he first looked sternly at Ned, and then turning toward Harry, with an eye that sought occasion for present quarrel, he questioned him morosely on some articles of his lesson; when Ned, not enduring such an indignity to the patron of his life and fortunes, gave a second twitch with better will, and much more lively than the first; and up again sprung Vindex with redoubled vigour and action, and bounded, plunged, and pranced about the room, as bewitched. He glared, and searched all about with a frantic penetration, and peered into every corner for the visible or invisible perpetrators of these mischiefs; when, hearing a little titter, he began to smell a fox, and, with a malignant determination of better note for the future, he returned with a countenance of dissembled placability, and, resuming his chair, began to examine the boys with a voice apparently tuned by good temper and affection.

During this short scene, poor Ned happened to make a little trip in his

rudiments, when Vindex turned, and cried to our hero—Mr. Harry, my dear, be so kind as to get up and reach me yon ferule.

These words had not fully passed the lips of the luckless preceptor, when Ned plucked the string with his utmost force, and Vindex thought himself at least impaled on the spot. Up he shot once more, like a sudden pyramid of flame. The ground could no longer retain him—he soared aloft, roared and raved like a thousand infernals. While Ned, with an aspect of the most condoling hypocrisy, and words broke by a tone of mourning, tenderly inquired of his ailments.

Vindex turned upon him an eye of jealous malignity, and taking a sudden thought, he flew to the scene of his repeated infliction, and turning up the bottom of the seat of pain, this complicated effort of extraordinary genius lay revealed, and exposed to vulgar contemplation.

He first examined minutely into the parts and construction of this wonderful machinery, whose efficacy he still so feelingly recollected. He then drew the string, and admired with what a piercing agility the needle could be actuated by so distant a hand. And lastly, and deliberately, he tore away, piece by piece, the whole composition, as his rascally brethren, the Turks, have also done, in their antipathy to all the monuments of arts, genius, and learning, throughout the earth.

In the meantime, our friend Edward sat trembling, and frying in his skin. All his drollery had forsaken him; nor had he a single cast of contrivance for evading the mountain of mischiefs that he saw impending. How, indeed, could he palliate? what had he to hope or plead in mitigation of the penalty, where, in the party so highly offended, he saw his judge and his executioner?

Mr. Vindex had now the ball wholly at his own foot; and that Ned was ever to have his turn again, was a matter no way promised by present appearances.

Vindex at length looked smilingly about him, with much fun in his face, but more vengeance at his heart—Mr. Edward, said he, perhaps you are not yet apprised of the justice of the Jewish laws, that claim an eye for an eye, and a breach for a breach; but I, my child, will fully instruct you in the fitness and propriety of them.

Then, reaching at the rod, he seized his shrinking prey as a kite trusses a robin; he laid him, like a little sack, across his own stool; off go the trousers, and with the left hand he holds him down, while the right is laid at him with the application of a woodman, who resolves to clear part of the forest before noon.

Harry, who was no way privy to the machination of the needle, now approached, and interposed in behalf of his unhappy servant. He petitioned, he kneeled, he wept; but his prayers and tears were cast to the winds and the rocks, till Vindex had reduced poor Ned to a plight little different from that of St. Bartholomew.

HORACE WALPOLE, FOURTH EARL OF ORFORD

(1717-1797)

HORACE WALPOLE, fourth son of the first Earl of Orford (Sir Robert Walpole), was born in Arlington Street on 24th September, 1717. He was educated at Eton and at King's College, Cambridge, on leaving which he travelled for two years on the Continent. He started on his travels with Thomas Gray (q.v.), but the friends quarrelled and returned home separately. In 1741 he entered the House of Commons, and sat for various constituencies for twenty-seven years. Thanks to his father, he held several sinecures, which enabled him, as he never married, to live comfortably and freely indulge his literary and antiquarian tastes. In 1747 he purchased Strawberry Hill, near London, where he erected a Gothic villa, laid out the grounds with minute ingenuity, and made it a principal business of his life to adorn and furnish it with objects of curiosity and antiquarian interest. In 1757 he established a private printing-press at Strawberry Hill, at which he printed not only his own works but those of others. When in his seventy-fifth year he succeeded his nephew as fourth Earl of Orford, but the estate was impoverished, and he never took his seat in the House of Lords, and sometimes avoided using his title, describing himself as "uncle of the third Earl of Orford". He died on the 2nd March, 1797. His works are numerous, and include *A Cata-*

logue of the Royal and Noble Authors of England (1758); *Anecdotes of Painting in England* (1762-1771); *Historic Doubts on the Life and Reign of King Richard III.* (1768), an attempt to whitewash that monarch; and *The Mysterious Mother* (1768), an unpleasant and unactable tragedy. His fame as a writer, however, rests on his *Letters* and *Memoirs*. The former, which number over three thousand, are held to be unsurpassed in the English language, and both are highly interesting and valuable as a storehouse of the more evanescent traits of contemporary history. The *Letters* cover a period of more than sixty years. His Gothic romance, *The Castle of Otranto* (1764), set the fashion, followed by Mrs. Radcliffe and Clara Reeve, of writing "tales of terror". This novel claimed to be translated by William Marshal, Gent., from the original Italian of Onuphrio Muralto, Canon of the Church of St. Nicholas at Otranto, but Walpole's authorship was soon made known. The puerile supernaturalism (sometimes, perhaps, half playful) of this romance makes it unreadable save as a literary curiosity, but its influence on English and foreign literature was far greater than that of many more artistic tales. It substituted invention for observation, and heralded, in a crude way, the renaissance of wonder, the romantic revival, and the Waverley novels.

[Austin Dobson, *Horace Wal-*

pole; Mrs. Paget Toynbee's edition of Walpole's *Letters* (16 vols.); L. B. Seeley, *Horace Walpole and his World*; Dorothy M. Stuart, *Horace Walpole*; Paget Toynbee, *Horace Walpole's Journal of the Printing Office at Strawberry Hill*; *Strawberry Hill Accounts*; *Horace Walpole's Journals of Visits to Country Seats*.]

Letters

To George Montagu, Esq.

STRAWBERRY-HILL, June 6, 1752.

I have just been in London for two or three days, to fetch an adventure, and am returned to my hill and my castle. I can't say I lost my labour, as you shall hear. Last Sunday night, being as wet a night as you shall see in a summer's day, about half an hour after twelve, I was just come home from White's, and undressing to step into bed, I heard Harry, who you know lies forwards, roar out, "Stop thief!" and run down stairs. I ran after him. Don't be frightened; I have not lost one enamel, nor bronze, nor have been shot through the head again. A gentlewoman, who lives at governor Pitt's, next door but one to me, and where Mr. Bentley used to live, was going to bed, too, and heard people breaking into Mr. Freeman's house, who, like some acquaintance of mine in Albemarle-street, goes out of town, locks up his doors, and leaves the community to watch his furniture. N.B. It was broken open but two years ago, and I and all the chairmen vow they shall steal his house away another time, before we will trouble our heads about it. Well, madam called out "Watch"; two men, who were centinels, ran away, and Harry's voice after them. Down came I, and with a posse of chairmen and watchmen found the third fellow in the area of Mr. Freeman's house. Mayhap you have seen all this in the papers, little thinking who commanded the detachment. Harry fetched a blunderbuss to invite the thief up. One of the chairmen who was drunk, cried, "Give me the blunderbuss, I'll shoot him!" But, as the general's head was a little cooler, he prevented military execution, and took the prisoner without bloodshed, intending to make his triumphal entry into the metropolis of Twickenham with his captive tied to the wheels of his post-chaise. I find my style rises so much with the recollection of my victory, that I don't know how to descend to tell you that the enemy was a carpenter, and had a leather apron on. The next step was to share my glory with my friends. I dispatched a courier to White's for George Selwyn, who, you know, loves nothing upon earth so well as a criminal, except the execution of him. It happened very luckily, that the drawer, who received my message, has very lately been robbed himself, and had the wound fresh in his memory. He stalked up into the club room, stopped short, and with a hollow trembling voice said, "Mr. Selwyn!

Mr. Walpole's compliments to you, and he has got a house-breaker for you!" A squadron immediately came to reinforce me, and, having summoned Moreland with the keys of the fortress, we marched into the house to search for more of the gang. Col. Seabright with his sword drawn went first, and then I, exactly the figure of Robinson Crusoe, with a candle, and lanthorn in my hand, a carbine upon my shoulder, my hair wet and about my ears, and in a linen night-gown and slippers. We found the kitchen shutters forced, but not finished; and in the area a tremendous bag of tools, a hammer large enough for the hand of a Jael, and six chisels! All which *opima spolia*, as there was no temple of Jupiter Capitolinus in the neighbourhood, I was reduced to offer on the altar of Sir Thomas Clarges.

I am now, as I told you, returned to my plough with as much humility and pride as any of my great predecessors. We lead quite a rural life, have had a sheep-shearing, a hay-making, a syllabub under the cow, and a fishing of three gold fish out of Poyang, for a present to madam Clive. They breed with me excessively, and are grown to the size of small perch. Everything grows, if tempests would let it, but I have had two of my largest trees broke to-day with the wind, and another last week. I am much obliged to you for the flower you offer me, but, by the description, it is an Austrian rose, and I have several now in bloom. Mr. Bentley is with me, finishing the drawings for Gray's odes; there are some mandarin-cats fishing for gold fish, which will delight you; *au reste*, he is just where he was; he has heard something about a journey to Haughton, to the great Cu¹ of Haticuleo, but it don't seem fixed, unless he hears further. Did he tell you the Prices and your aunt Cosby had dined here from Hampton-court? The mignonette beauty looks mighty well in his grandmother's jointure. The memoirs of last year are quite finished, but I shall add some pages of notes, that will not want anecdotes. Discontents of the nature of those about Windsor-park, are spreading about Richmond. Lord Brooke, who has taken the late duchess of Rutland's at Petersham, asked for a key; the answer was (mind it, for it was tolerably mortifying to an earl), that the princess had already refused one to my lord chancellor.

By the way, you know that reverend head of the law is frequently shut up here with my lady Monrath, who is as rich, and as tipsey, as Cacafofo in the comedy. What a jumble of avarice, lewdness, dignity,—and claret!

You will be pleased with a story of lord Bury, that is come from Scotland: he is quartered at Inverness: the magistrates invited him to an entertainment with fire-works, which they intended to give on the morrow for the duke's birthday. He thanked them, assured them he would represent their zeal to his royal highness; but he did not doubt that it would be more agreeable to him, if they postponed it to the day following, the anniversary of the battle of Culloden. They stared, said they could not

¹The Earl of Halifax.

promise on their own authority, but would go and consult their body. They returned, told him it was unprecedented, and could not be complied with. Lord Bury replied, he was sorry they had not given a negative at once, for he had mentioned it to his soldiers, who would not bear a disappointment, and was afraid it would provoke them to some outrage upon the town. This did;—they celebrated Culloden.

Adieu! my compliments to Miss Montagu.

From "The Castle of Otranto"

The lower part of the castle was hollowed into several intricate cloisters; and it was not easy for one, under so much anxiety, to find the door that opened into the cavern. An awful silence reigned throughout those subterraneous regions, except now and then some blasts of wind that shook the doors she had passed, and which, grating on the rusty hinges, were re-echoed through that long labyrinth of darkness. Every murmur struck her with new terror;—yet more she dreaded to hear the wrathful voice of Manfred, urging his domestics to pursue her. She trod as softly as impatience would give her leave,—yet frequently stopped, and listened, to hear if she was followed. In one of those moments she thought she heard a sigh. She shuddered, and recoiled a few paces. In a moment she thought she heard the step of some person. Her blood curdled; she concluded it was Manfred. Every suggestion that horror could inspire rushed into her mind. She condemned her rash flight, which had thus exposed her to his rage, in a place where her cries were not likely to draw anybody to her assistance. Yet the sound seemed not to come from behind: if Manfred knew where she was, he must have followed her. She was still in one of the cloisters, and the steps she had heard were too distinct to proceed from the way she had come. Cheered with this reflection, and hoping to find a friend in whoever was not the Prince, she was going to advance, when a door, that stood ajar at some distance to the left, was opened gently; but ere her lamp, which she held up, could discover who opened it, the person retreated precipitately on seeing the light.

Isabella, whom every incident was sufficient to dismay, hesitated whether she should proceed. Her dread of Manfred soon outweighed every other terror. The very circumstance of the person avoiding her, gave her a sort of courage. It could only be, she thought, some domestic belonging to the castle. Her gentleness had never raised her an enemy; and conscious innocence made her hope that, unless sent by the Prince's order to seek her, his servants would rather assist than prevent her flight. Fortifying herself with these reflections, and believing, by what she could observe, that she was near the mouth of the subterraneous cavern, she approached the door that had been opened; but a sudden gust of wind that met her at the door extinguished her lamp, and left her in total darkness.

CHRISTOPHER SMART

(1722 - 1771)

CHRISTOPHER SMART was born at Shipbourne, Kent, on 11th April, 1722. His father was steward to Lord Vane. He was educated at Durham School and at Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, where he graduated B.A. in 1742 and M.A. in 1747. He was elected to a fellowship in 1745. In 1750 the Seatonian Prize was established at Cambridge. This prize is for a poem on a sacred subject, "which subject shall for the first year be one or other of the Perfections or Attributes of the Supreme Being, and so the succeeding years till that subject is exhausted". Smart won the prize five times, celebrating in turn the Eternity, the Immensity, the Omniscience, the Power, and the Goodness of the Supreme Being. The prize, in fact, provided him with a small but steady income, for in those days men were "passing rich with forty pounds a year". Possibly as a result of his meditations on the Attributes of the Supreme Being, Smart was a victim of religious mania, and was sent to Bedlam for a short time in 1751. Not long after his release, he married and forfeited his fellowship; he then became a hack-writer, and never prospered again. Drink, debt, and threats of insanity were the chief causes of his misery. With one exception his works are all forgotten; no one reads his georgic *The Hop Garden* (1752), his satire *The Hilliad* (1753), or his prose translation of Horace, which attained almost the rank of a classic during its long life as

a "crib". In 1763 the poet was sent back to Bedlam, and while there wrote his one good poem, *A Song to David*. The legend says that he wrote it with charcoal on the walls of his cell, but as the poem is some six hundred lines long, it is unlikely that this story is entirely true, though it may well be founded on fact. Smart died within the rules of the King's Bench prison for debtors on 21st May, 1771.

Smart's religious, facetious, and miscellaneous poems are all forgotten; he is only remembered as the author of *A Song to David*. It is a curious commentary on the tastes of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, that, while the editor of the 1791 edition of Smart omitted this poem as bearing "melancholy proofs of the recent estrangement of his mind", Rossetti described it as "the only great accomplished poem of the eighteenth century", and Browning placed its author "with Milton and with Keats". *Medio tutissimus ibis*. The poem is not the work of a lunatic or of a great genius; it is ill-arranged, wearisome, and full of repetitions; but what makes it noteworthy is that, in an age of verse-manufacturing, it appears to be a genuinely inspired and fervently conceived poem. Smart was not happy in a choice of metre for his masterpiece, as he selected the stanza indissolubly connected for lovers of Chaucer with the *Tale of Sir Thopas*. *A Song to David* was edited by Edmund Blunden in 1924.

From "A Song to David"

Sweet is the dew that falls betimes,
And drops upon the leafy limes;
 Sweet Hermon's fragrant air:
Sweet is the lily's silver bell,
And sweet the wakeful tapers' smell
 That watch for early prayer.

Sweet the young nurse with love intense,
Which smiles o'er sleeping innocence;
 Sweet when the lost arrive:
Sweet the musician's ardour beats,
While his vague mind's in quest of sweets,
 The choicest flowers to hive.

Sweeter in all the strains of love
The language of thy turtle dove
 Paired to thy swelling chord;
Sweeter with every grace endued
The glory of thy gratitude
 Respired unto the Lord.

Strong is the horse upon his speed;
Strong in pursuit the rapid glede,
 Which makes at once his game:
Strong the tall ostrich on the ground;
Strong thro' the turbulent profound
 Shoots xiphias to his aim.

Strong is the lion—like a coal
His eyeball—like a bastion's mole
 His chest against the foes;
Strong, the gier-eagle on his sail,
Strong against tide th' enormous whale
 Emerges as he goes.

But stronger still, in earth and air,
And in the sea, the man of prayer;
 And far beneath the tide;
And in the seat to faith assigned,
Where ask is have, where seek is find,
 Where knock is open wide.

CHRISTOPHER SMART

Beauteous the fleet before the gale;
 Beauteous the multitudes in mail,
 Ranked arms and crested heads:
 Beauteous the garden's umbrage mild,
 Walk, water, meditated wild,
 And all the bloomy beds.

Beauteous the moon full on the lawn;
 And beauteous, when the veil's withdrawn,
 The virgin to her spouse:
 Beauteous the temple decked and filled,
 When to the heaven of heavens they build
 Their heart-directed vows.

Beauteous, yea beauteous more than these,
 The shepherd-king upon his knees
 For his momentous trust;
 With wish of infinite conceit,
 For man, beast, mute, the small and great,
 And prostrate dust to dust.

Precious the bounteous widow's mite;
 And precious, for extreme delight,
 The largess from the churl:
 Precious the ruby's blushing blaze,
 And alba's blest imperial rays,
 And pure cerulean pearl.

Precious the penitential tear;
 And precious is the sigh sincere,
 Acceptable to God:
 And precious are the winning flowers,
 In gladsome Israel's feast of bowers,
 Bound on the hallowed sod.

More precious that diviner part
 Of David, even the Lord's own heart,
 Great, beautiful, and new;
 In all things where it was intent,
 In all extremes, in each event
 Proof—answering true to true.

Glorious the sun in mid career;
 Glorious th' assembled fires appear;
 Glorious the comet's train:

Glorious the trumpet and alarm;
Glorious th' almighty stretched-out arm;
Glorious th' enraptured main:

Glorious the northern lights astream;
Glorious the song, when God's the theme;
Glorious the thunder's roar:
Glorious hosanna from the den;
Glorious the catholic amen;
Glorious the martyr's gore:

Glorious—more glorious is the crown
Of Him that brought salvation down,
By meekness call'd thy Son;
Thou that stupendous truth believed,
And now the matchless deed's achieved,
Determined, dared, and done.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

(1728 – 1774)

OLIVER GOLDSMITH was born at Pallas, County Longford, on the 10th November, 1728. His father was a clergyman of the Established Church, with a large family and a small income. Goldsmith attended the village school, then kept by one "Paddy" Byrne, a former soldier who had acted as quartermaster during Marlborough's campaigns. Byrne, who was an original character, seems to have had an important influence upon Goldsmith, and was blamed by the poet's family for imbuing him with a wandering and unsettled turn of mind. When aged about eight, Goldsmith had a severe attack of smallpox, which disfigured him greatly and made him very sensitive. After leaving the village school, he went to schools

at Elphin, Athlone, and Edgeworthstown. On 11th June, 1744, he was admitted to Trinity College, Dublin, as a sizar. In those days sizars received free board and tuition in return for performing certain menial duties. The position entailed a good deal of humiliation, and Goldsmith was acutely sensitive about it. Many stories and legends are still preserved of his scrapes and escapades at college. His tutor was an unsympathetic mathematician, and did not see any remarkable qualities in his pupil. Goldsmith became a B.A. on 27th February, 1749. His name was last on the list. He now coquetted with each of the learned professions in turn. He presented himself to the Bishop of Elphin

for ordination, but, as he appeared in scarlet breeches, was thought unworthy of holy orders. He borrowed £50 from his uncle in order to study law, but was cheated of it before he got farther than Dublin. He then left Ireland—for ever, as it turned out—and went to Edinburgh to study medicine under Alexander Monro, the first of a dynasty of that name which reigned in the chair of anatomy at Edinburgh for over a hundred and twenty years. Goldsmith remained two years in Edinburgh, and then in 1754 went to complete his studies on the Continent. A certain element of myth surrounds his adventures there. He studied at Leyden and Louvain, and went on foot through France, Germany, Switzerland, and Italy, supporting himself by playing on the flute, or by disputing with scholars at convents or universities, like the Admirable Crichton. He himself alleged that he took the M.B. degree somewhere; it has been thought it was either at Padua or Louvain; it may have been a degree more or less like that of "B.A. failed" which the Baboo gentleman boasted of. Anyhow, when he landed in England on 1st February, 1756, he was a distinguished graduate of the world's university. He had seen many sides of life, and was destined to see many more. He became a strolling player, an apothecary's assistant, an usher, a reader to Richardson (the novelist and printer), and a poor physician. Finally he began to do hack-work for various publishers, commencing by writing many reviews and critiques.

Goldsmith's literary works may be divided into two classes: those which were original, and those

which were compilations. He might have said, with Shakespeare, "Two loves I have of comfort and despair". The "better angel" wrote the *Inquiry into the State of Polite Learning*, the *Essays*, *The Bee*, *The Citizen of the World*, *The Vicar of Wakefield*, and the poems and plays. "The worse spirit," meanwhile, was busy at histories of Greece, Rome, and England, and at a work on natural history entitled *Animated Nature*, as well as writing various shorter works such as the *Life of Beau Nash*, *Memoir of Voltaire*, and *Life of Bolingbroke*. It is not necessary to say much of Goldsmith's compilations. Even in them he displays his beautifully easy style, his own distinct way of writing. He was not a scholar by nature, and did not wish to undertake any laborious investigations, even had his slave-drivers given him time for them. Gibbon almost persuaded him to write an account of Alexander the Great's campaign against Montezuma. In his *Animated Nature* he was sometimes indebted to his imagination for his facts. In his accounts of battles he takes the old-fashioned, not to say Homeric, view that it is only the leader on either side who really matters. Yet, in spite of some obvious absurdities, his compilation work is good, as he rendered attractive many subjects which often become dry in more scholarly hands.

His original works are, however, on a different plane altogether. In them he expressed his unique personality. No one ever put so much of himself into his books as Goldsmith. His longer poems, *The Traveller* and *The Deserted Village*, are excellent poems of a

didactic kind, exquisitely expressed. *The Traveller* made Goldsmith's reputation, and helped him into the best literary society in London. There has been much debate as to whether Auburn is the village of Lissoy in Ireland or an English village. It appears to be a composite village, English in its prosperity, Irish in its adversity. His lighter poems, *The Haunch of Venison* and *Retaliation* especially, are delightful. *Retaliation* is a masterpiece of urbane satire, which combines compliment and banter while describing the characters of some of his friends, such as Garrick, Burke, and Reynolds. Of the two plays, *She Stoops to Conquer* (1773) is a good deal better than *The Good Natur'd Man* (1768). The latter is a good comedy of manners, modelled upon Goldsmith's compatriot Farquhar; it has two well-drawn characters, Croaker and Lofty, but is not entirely successful. *She Stoops to Conquer* is a splendid comedy of intrigue, introducing lively and farcical incidents and highly-drawn pictures of eccentric characters. The central incident, the mistaking of a house for an inn, is based upon a misadventure of the author's youth. This comedy still holds the stage, and is as amusing to-day as when it was first produced. It did much to kill the taste for sentimental or genteel comedies, such as those of Cumberland and Kelly.

Some of the essays, especially those in *The Bee*, are good, though not perhaps supremely good. *An Inquiry into the State of Polite Learning* is readable but not profound. *The Citizen of the World* (1762), in which a Chinaman describes English manners and customs, contains pieces more

characteristic of Goldsmith, especially in the passages describing Beau Tibbs. These passages are as good as anything in Addison. Goldsmith's great masterpiece, however, is *The Vicar of Wakefield*, which Johnson sold for £60 in 1762, but which did not appear until 1766. The plot is full of inconsistencies, and is less skillfully manipulated as the story progresses, and the book is padded with poems, tales, and a sermon; but in spite of these faults it is a real classic. Dr. and Mrs. Primrose, Moses and his green spectacles, Olivia and Sophia, and the Misses Flamborough will live as long as any characters given us by Fielding, Dickens, or Thackeray. It is at once humorous and pathetic; unlike his contemporary Sterne, Goldsmith could be sentimental without being unmanly.

Goldsmith was a friend of all the most notable literary men of his day: Johnson, Burke, Gibbon, Garrick, Boswell, and Reynolds. They seem to have regarded him with affectionate toleration, as one would regard a child. Indeed, like Peter Pan, he seems to have refused to grow up. He had many amiable weaknesses: a taste for gaudy clothes, a liking for gambling, and an ambition to shine in conversation. Nature had made him an exquisite writer, but a poor talker. He was recklessly charitable when he had any money. He is said to have died £2000 in debt, and his financial troubles hastened his end. He died on 4th April, 1774, having unwisely prescribed a patent medicine, James's powder, for himself. He was buried in the burial-ground of the Temple Church. The cenotaph erected in Westminster Abbey

has upon it a Latin epitaph by Johnson which contains the happiest verdict that can be given upon Goldsmith: "Nullum fere scribendi genus non tetigit; nullum quod tetigit non ornavit"—he touched almost every kind of writing, and touched none that he did not adorn.

[J. Forster, *Life and Adventures of Oliver Goldsmith*; Sir James Prior, *Life of Oliver Goldsmith*; Austin Dobson, *Life of Goldsmith* (Great Writers Series); W. Black, *Goldsmith* (English Men of Letters Series); R. Ashe King, *Oliver Goldsmith*; F. Frankfort Moore, *Goldsmith*.]

From "The Vicar of Wakefield"

CHAPTER XIV

The journey of my daughters to town was now resolved upon, Mr. Thornhill having kindly promised to inspect their conduct himself, and inform us by letter of their behaviour. But it was thought indispensably necessary that their appearance should equal the greatness of their expectations, which could not be done without expense. We debated therefore in full council what were the easiest methods of raising money, or, more properly speaking, what we could most conveniently sell. The deliberation was soon finished: it was found that our remaining horse was utterly useless for the plough without his companion, and equally unfit for the road, as wanting an eye: it was therefore determined that we should dispose of him for the purpose above mentioned, at the neighbouring fair; and, to prevent imposition, that I should go with him myself. Though this was one of the first mercantile transactions of my life, yet I had no doubt about acquitting myself with reputation. The opinion a man forms of his own prudence is measured by that of the company he keeps: and as mine was most in the family way, I had conceived no unfavourable sentiments of my wordly wisdom. My wife, however, next morning, at parting, after I had got some paces from the door, called me back to advise me, in a whisper, to have all my eyes about me.

I had, in the usual forms, when I came to the fair, put my horse through all the paces, but for some time had no bidders. At last a chapman approached, and after he had for a good while examined the horse round, finding him blind of one eye, he would have nothing to say to him; a second came up, but observing he had a spavin, declared he would not take him for the driving home; a third perceived he had a windgall, and would bid no money; a fourth knew by his eye that he had the botts; a fifth wondered what a plague I could do at the fair with a blind, spavined, galled hack, that was only fit to be cut up for a dog kennel. By this time, I began to have a most hearty contempt for the poor animal myself, and was almost ashamed at the approach of every customer: for though I did not entirely believe all the fellows told me, yet I reflected that the

number of witnesses was a strong presumption they were right; and St. Gregory, upon Good Works, professes himself to be of the same opinion.

I was in this mortifying situation, when a brother clergyman, an old acquaintance, who had also business at the fair, came up, and, shaking me by the hand, proposed adjourning to a public-house, and taking a glass of whatever we could get. I readily closed with the offer, and entering into an alehouse, we were shown into a little back room, where there was only a venerable old man, who sat wholly intent over a large book, which he was reading. I never in my life saw a figure that prepossessed me more favourably. His locks of silver grey venerably shaded his temples, and his green old age seemed to be the result of health and benevolence. However, his presence did not interrupt our conversation: my friend and I discoursed on the various turns of fortune we had met; the Whistonian controversy, my last pamphlet, the archdeacon's reply, and the hard measure that was dealt me. But our attention was in a short time taken off, by the appearance of a youth, who, entering the room, respectfully said something softly to the old stranger. "Make no apologies, my child," said the old man; "to do good is a duty we owe to all our fellow-creatures; take this, I wish it were more; but five pounds will relieve your distress, and you are welcome." The modest youth shed tears of gratitude, and yet his gratitude was scarce equal to mine. I could have hugged the good old man in my arms, his benevolence pleased me so. He continued to read, and we resumed our conversation, until my companion, after some time, recollecting that he had business to transact in the fair, promised to be soon back; adding, that he always desired to have as much of Dr. Primrose's company as possible. The old gentleman, hearing my name mentioned, seemed to look at me with attention for some time; and when my friend was gone, most respectfully demanded if I was any way related to the great Primrose, that courageous monogamist, who had been the bulwark of the Church. Never did my heart feel sincerer rapture than at that moment. "Sir," cried I, "the applause of so good a man as I am sure you are, adds to that happiness in my breast which your benevolence has already excited. You behold before you, sir, that Dr. Primrose, that monogamist, whom you have been pleased to call great. You here see that unfortunate divine, who has so long, and it would ill become me to say, successfully, fought against the deuterogamy of the age."—"Sir," cried the stranger, struck with awe, "I fear I have been too familiar, but you'll forgive my curiosity, sir: I beg pardon."—"Sir," cried I, grasping his hand, "you are so far from displeasing me by your familiarity, that I must beg you'll accept my friendship, as you already have my esteem."—"Then with gratitude I accept the offer," cried he, squeezing me by the hand, "thou glorious pillar of unshaken orthodoxy! and do I behold——" I here interrupted what he was going to say; for though, as an author, I could digest no small share of flattery, yet now my modesty

would permit no more. However, no lovers in romance ever cemented a more instantaneous friendship. We talked upon several subjects: at first I thought he seemed rather devout than learned, and began to think he despised all human doctrines as dross. Yet this no way lessened him in my esteem, for I had for some time begun privately to harbour such an opinion myself. I therefore took occasion to observe, that the world in general began to be blameably indifferent as to doctrinal matters, and followed human speculations too much. "Ay, sir," replied he, as if he had reserved all his learning to that moment, "ay, sir, the world is in its dotage; and yet the cosmogony, or creation of the world, has puzzled philosophers of all ages. What a medley of opinions have they not broached upon the creation of the world! Sanchoniathon, Manetho, Berosus, and Ocellus Lucanus, have all attempted it in vain. The latter has these words, *Anarchon ara kai atelutaion to pan*, which imply that all things have neither beginning nor end. Manetho also, who lived about the time of Nebuchadon-Asser—Asser being a Syriac word, usually applied as a surname to the kings of that country, as Teglath Prael-Asser, Nabon-Asser—he, I say, formed a conjecture equally absurd; for, as we usually say, *ek to biblion kubernetes*, which implies that books will never teach the world; so he attempted to investigate—But, sir, I ask pardon, I am straying from the question."—That he actually was; nor could I, for my life, see how the creation of the world had anything to do with the business I was talking of; but it was sufficient to show me that he was a man of letters, and I now revered him the more. I was resolved, therefore, to bring him to the touchstone; but he was too mild, and too gentle to contend for victory. Whenever I made an observation that looked like a challenge to controversy, he would smile, shake his head, and say nothing; by which I understand he could say much, if he thought proper. The subject, therefore, insensibly changed from the business of antiquity to that which brought us both to the fair: mine, I told him, was to sell a horse, and very luckily indeed, his was to buy one for one of his tenants. My horse was soon produced; and, in fine, we struck a bargain. Nothing now remained but to pay me, and he accordingly pulled out a thirty pound note, and bid me change it. Not being in a capacity of complying with this demand, he ordered his footman to be called up, who made his appearance in a very genteel livery. "Here, Abraham," cried he, "go and get gold for this; you'll do it at neighbour Jackson's, or anywhere." While the fellow was gone, he entertained me with a pathetic harangue on the great scarcity of silver, which I undertook to improve, by deploring also the great scarcity of gold; so that, by the time Abraham returned, we had both agreed that money was never so hard to come at as now. Abraham returned to inform us that he had been over the whole fair, and could not get change, though he had offered half-a-crown for doing it. This was a very great disappointment to us all; but the old gentleman, having paused

a little, asked me if I knew one Solomon Flamborough in my part of the country. Upon replying that he was my next door neighbour: "If that be the case, then," returned he, "I believe we shall deal. You shall have a draft upon him, payable at sight; and, let me tell you, he is as warm a man as any within five miles round him. Honest Solomon and I have been acquainted for many years together. I remember I always beat him at three jumps; but he could hop on one leg farther than I." A draft upon my neighbour was to me the same as money; for I was sufficiently convinced of his ability. The draft was signed, and put into my hands, and Mr. Jenkinson, the old gentleman, his man Abraham, and my horse, old Blackberry, trotted off very well pleased with each other.

After a short interval, being left to reflection, I began to recollect that I had done wrong in taking a draft from a stranger, and so prudently resolved upon following the purchaser, and having back my horse. But this was now too late; I therefore made directly homewards, resolving to get the draft changed into money at my friend's as fast as possible. I found my honest neighbour smoking his pipe at his own door, and informing him that I had a small bill upon him, he read it twice over. "You can read the name, I suppose," cried I,—"Ephraim Jenkinson."—"Yes," returned he, "the name is written plain enough, and I know the gentleman too,—the greatest rascal under the canopy of heaven. This is the very same rogue who sold us the spectacles. Was he not a venerable-looking man, with grey hair, and no flaps to his pockets-holes? And did he not talk a long string of learning about Greek, and cosmogony, and the world?" To this I replied with a groan. "Ay," continued he, "he has but that one piece of learning in the world, and he always talks it away whenever he finds a scholar in company; but I know the rogue and will catch him yet."

Though I was already sufficiently mortified, my greatest struggle was to come, in facing my wife and daughters. No truant was ever more afraid of returning to school, there to behold the master's visage, than I was of going home. I was determined, however, to anticipate their fury, by first falling into a passion myself.

But, alas! upon entering, I found the family in no way disposed for battle. My wife and girls were all in tears, Mr. Thornhill having been there that day to inform them that their journey to town was entirely over. The two ladies, having heard reports of us from some malicious person about us, were that day set out for London. He could neither discover the tendency nor the author of these; but whatever they might be, or whoever might have broached them, he continued to assure our family of his friendship and protection. I found, therefore, that they bore my disappointment with great resignation, as it was eclipsed in the greatness of their own. But what perplexed us most, was to think who could be so base as to asperse the character of a family so harmless as ours; too humble to excite envy, and too inoffensive to create disgust.

From "The Citizen of the World"

LETTER XX

The *Republic of Letters* is a very common expression among the Europeans; and yet when applied to the learned of Europe is the most absurd that can be imagined; since nothing is more unlike a republic than the society which goes by that name. From this expression one would be apt to imagine that the learned were united into a single body, joining their interests, and concurring in the same design. From this one might be apt to compare them to our literary societies in China, where each acknowledges a just subordination, and all contribute to build the temple of science, without attempting, from ignorance or envy, to obstruct each other.

But very different is the state of learning here: every member of this fancied republic is desirous of governing, and none willing to obey; each looks upon his fellow as a rival, not an assistant in the same pursuit. They calumniate, they injure, they despise, they ridicule each other; if one man writes a book that pleases, others shall write books to show that he might have given still greater pleasure, or should not have pleased. If one happens to hit upon something new, there are numbers ready to assure the public that all this was no novelty to them or the learned; that Cardanus, or Brunus, or some other author too dull to be generally read, had anticipated the discovery. Thus, instead of uniting like the members of a commonwealth, they are divided into almost as many factions as there are men; and their jarring constitution, instead of being styled a republic of letters, should be entitled an anarchy of literature.

It is true, there are some of superior abilities, who reverence and esteem each other; But their mutual admiration is not sufficient to shield off the contempt of the crowd. The wise are but few, and they praise with a feeble voice; the vulgar are many, and roar in reproaches. The truly great seldom unite in societies; have few meetings, no cabals; the dunces hunt in full cry, till they have run down a reputation, and then snarl and fight with each other about dividing the spoil. Here you may see the compilers and the book-answerers of every month, when they have cut up some respectable name, most frequently reproaching each other with stupidity and dulness; resembling the wolves of the Russian forest, who prey upon venison, or horse-flesh, when they can get it; but in cases of necessity, lying in wait to devour each other. While they have new books to cut up, they make a hearty meal; but if this resource should unhappily fail, then it is that critics eat up critics, and compilers rob from compilations.

Confucius observes, that it is the duty of the learned to unite society more closely, and to persuade men to become citizens of the world; but

the authors I refer to are not only for disuniting society, but kingdoms also: if the English are at war with France, the dunces of France think it their duty to be at war with those of England. Thus Fréron, one of their first-rate scribblers, thinks proper to characterise all the English writers in the gross: "Their whole merit," says he, "consists in exaggeration, and often in extravagance: correct their pieces as you please, there still remains a leaven which corrupts the whole. They sometimes discover genius, but not the smallest share of taste: England is not a soil for the plants of genius to thrive in." This is open enough, with not the least adulation in the picture; but hear what a Frenchman of acknowledged abilities says upon the same subject: "I am at a loss to determine in what we excel the English, or where they excel us; when I compare the merits of both in any one species of literary composition, so many reputable and pleasing writers present themselves from either country, that my judgment rests in suspense: I am pleased with the disquisition, without finding the object of my inquiry." But lest you should think the French alone are faulty in this respect, hear how an English journalist delivers his sentiments of them: "We are amazed," says he, "to find so many works translated from the French, while we have such numbers neglected of our own. In our opinion, notwithstanding their fame throughout the rest of Europe, the French are the most contemptible reasoners (we had almost said writers) that can be imagined. However, nevertheless, excepting," &c. Another English writer, Shaftesbury, if I remember, on the contrary, says that the French authors are pleasing and judicious, more clear, more methodical and entertaining, than those of his own country.

From these opposite pictures you perceive that the good authors of either country praise, and the bad revile, each other; and yet, perhaps, you will be surprised that indifferent writers should thus be the most apt to censure, as they have the most to apprehend from recrimination: you may, perhaps, imagine, that such as are possessed of fame themselves should be most ready to declare their opinions, since what they say might pass for decision. But the truth happens to be, that the great are solicitous only of raising their own reputations, while the opposite class, alas! are solicitous of bringing every reputation down to a level with their own.

But let us acquit them of malice and envy. A critic is often guided by the same motives that direct his author: the author endeavours to persuade us, that he has written a good book; the critic is equally solicitous to show that he could write a better had he thought proper. A critic is a being possessed of all the vanity, but not the genius, of a scholar: incapable, from his native weakness, of lifting himself from the ground, he applies to contiguous merit for support; makes the sportive sallies of another's imagination his serious employment; pretends to take our

feelings under his care; teaches where to condemn, where to lay the emphasis of praise; and may with as much justice be called a man of taste as the Chinese who measures his wisdom by the length of his nails.

If, then, a book, spirited or humorous, happens to appear in the republic of letters, several critics are in waiting to bid the public not to laugh at a single line of it; for themselves had read it, and they know what is proper to excite laughter. Other critics contradict the fulminations of this tribunal, call them all spiders, and assure the public, that they ought to laugh without restraint. Another set are in the meantime quietly employed in writing notes to the book, intended to show the particular passages to be laughed at: when these are out, others still there are who write notes upon notes: thus a single new book employs not only the paper-makers, the printers, the pressmen, the bookbinders, the hawkers, but twenty critics, and as many compilers. In short, the body of the learned may be compared to a Persian army, where there are many pioneers, several sutlers, numberless servants, women and children in abundance, and but few soldiers.—Adieu.

From “She Stoops to Conquer”

Act II

SCENE: *An old-fashioned house*

(Enter **HARDCASTLE**, followed by three or four awkward **SERVANTS**.)

Hardcastle.—Well, I hope you are perfect in the table exercise I have been teaching you these three days. You all know your posts and your places, and can show that you have been used to good company, without ever stirring from home.

Omnes.—Ay, ay.

Hardcastle.—When company comes you are not to pop out and stare, and then run in again, like frightened rabbits in a warren.

Omnes.—No, no.

Hardcastle.—You, Diggory, whom I have taken from the barn, are to make a show at the side-table; and you, Roger, whom I have advanced from the plough, are to place yourself behind my chair. But you're not to stand so, with your hands in your pockets. Take your hands from your pockets, Roger: and from your head, you blockhead you. See how Diggory carries his hands. They're a little too stiff, indeed, but that's no great matter.

Diggory.—Ay, mind how I hold them. I learned to hold my hands this way when I was upon drill for the militia. And so being upon drill——

Hardcastle.—You must not be so talkative, Diggory. You must be all attention to the guests. You must hear us talk, and not think of talking; you must see us drink, and not think of drinking; you must see us eat, and not think of eating.

Diggory.—By the laws, your worship, that's perfectly impossible. Whenever Diggory sees yeating going forward, ecod, he's always wishing for a mouthful himself.

Hardcastle.—Blockhead! Is not a belly-full in the kitchen as good as a belly-full in the parlour? Stay your stomach with that reflection.

Diggory.—Ecod, I thank your worship, I'll make a shift to stay my stomach with a slice of cold beef in the pantry.

Hardcastle.—Diggory, you are too talkative—Then, if I happen to say a good thing, or tell a good story at table, you must not all burst out a-laughing, as if you made part of the company.

Diggory.—Then, ecod your worship must not tell the story of Ould Grouse in the gun-room; I can't help laughing at that—he! he! he! for the soul of me. We have laughed at that these twenty years,—ha! ha! ha!

Hardcastle.—Ha! ha! ha! The story is a good one. Well, honest Diggory, you may laugh at that—but still remember to be attentive. Suppose one of the company should call for a glass of wine, how will you behave? A glass of wine, sir, if you please (*to DIGGORY*)—Eh, why don't you move?

Diggory.—Ecod, your worship, I never have courage till I see the eatables and drinkables brought upo' the table, and then I'm as bauld as a lion.

Hardcastle.—What, will nobody move?

First Servant.—I'm not to leave this place.

Second Servant.—I'm sure it's no please of mine.

Third Servant.—Nor mine, for sartain.

Diggory.—Wauns, and I'm sure it canna be mine.

Hardcastle.—You numskulls! and so while, like your betters, you are quarrelling for places, the guests must be starved. O you dunces! I find I must begin all over again—But don't I hear a coach drive into the yard? To your posts, you blockheads. I'll go in the mean time and give my old friend's son a hearty reception at the gate. [*Exit HARDCASTLE.*]

Diggory.—By the elevens, my place is gone quite out of my head.

Roger.—I know that my place is to be everywhere.

First Servant.—Where the devil is mine?

Second Servant.—My place is to be nowhere at all; and so I'ze go about my business.

[*Exeunt SERVANTS, running about as if frightened, different ways.*]

From "The Deserted Village"

Near yonder copse, where once the garden smiled,
And still where many a garden-flower grows wild;
There, where a few torn shrubs the place disclose,
The village preacher's modest mansion rose.

A man he was to all the country dear,
 And passing rich with forty pounds a year;
 Remote from towns he ran his godly race,
 Nor e'er had changed, nor wished to change, his place;
 Unpractised he to fawn, or seek for power,
 By doctrines fashioned to the varying hour;
 Far other aims his heart had learned to prize.
 More skilled to raise the wretched than to rise.
 His house was known to all the vagrant train;
 He chid their wanderings, but relieved their pain:
 The long-remembered beggar was his guest,
 Whose beard descending swept his aged breast;
 The ruined spendthrift, now no longer proud,
 Claimed kindred there, and had his claims allowed;
 The broken soldier, kindly bade to stay,
 Sat by his fire, and talked the night away,
 Wept o'er his wounds or tales of sorrow done,
 Shouldered his crutch, and showed how fields were won.
 Pleased with his guests, the good man learned to glow,
 And quite forgot their vices in their woe;
 Careless their merits or their faults to scan,
 His pity gave ere charity began.

Thus to relieve the wretched was his pride,
 And e'en his failings leaned to virtue's side;
 But in his duty prompt at every call,
 He watched and wept, he prayed and felt for all;
 And, as a bird each fond endearment tries
 To tempt its new-fledged offspring to the skies,
 He tried each art, reproved each dull delay,
 Allured to brighter worlds, and led the way.

Beside the bed where parting life was laid,
 And sorrow, guilt, and pain, by turns dismayed,
 The reverend champion stood. At his control
 Despair and anguish fled the struggling soul;
 Comfort came down the trembling wretch to raise,
 And his last faltering accents whispered praise.

From "Retaliation"

Here lies David Garrick, describe me who can;
 An abridgment of all that was pleasant in man.
 As an actor, confessed without rival to shine:
 As a wit, if not first, in the very first line:

Yet, with talents like these, and an excellent heart,
 The man had his failings, a dupe to his art.
 Like an ill-judging beauty, his colours he spread,
 And beplastered with rouge his own natural red.
 On the stage he was natural, simple, affecting;
 'Twas only that, when he was off, he was acting.
 With no reason on earth to go out of his way,
 He turned and he varied full ten times a day:
 Though secure of our hearts, yet confoundedly sick
 If they were not his own by finessing and trick:
 He cast off his friends, as a huntsman his pack,
 For he knew when he pleased he could whistle them back
 Of praise a mere glutton, he swallowed what came;
 And the puff of a dunce, he mistook it for fame;
 Till his relish grew callous, almost to disease,
 Who peppered the highest, was surest to please.
 But let us be candid, and speak out our mind:
 If dunces applauded, he paid them in kind.
 Ye Kenricks, ye Kellys, and Woodfalls so grave,
 What a commerce was yours, while you got and you gave!
 How did Grub-street re-echo the shouts that you raised,
 While he was be-Rosciused, and you were bepraised.
 But peace to his spirit, wherever it flies,
 To act as an angel and mix with the skies:
 Those poets who owe their best fame to his skill
 Shall still be his flatterers, go where he will:
 Old Shakespeare receive him with praise and with love,
 And Beaumonts and Bens be his Kellys above.

.
 Here Reynolds is laid, and, to tell you my mind,
 He has not left a wiser or better behind.
 His pencil was striking, resistless, and grand;
 His manners were gentle, complying, and bland;
 Still born to improve us in every part,
 His pencil our faces, his manners our heart.
 To coxcombs averse, yet most civilly steering:
 When they judged without skill, he was still hard of hearing;
 When they talk'd of their Raphaels, Corregios, and stuff,
 He shifted his trumpet, and only took snuff.
 By flattery unspoilt . . .

(*Cetera desunt.*)

THOMAS PERCY

(1729 - 1811)

THOMAS PERCY was born at Bridgnorth on 13th April, 1729. He was the son of a grocer; but it became an amiable weakness of his, in later life, to believe that he was descended from the ducal house of Northumberland. He was educated at Bridgnorth Grammar School and Christ Church, Oxford, where he graduated B.A. in 1750 and M.A. in 1753. In the latter year he was presented to the college living of Easton Maudit, in Northamptonshire, to which the neighbouring rectory of Wilby was added three years later. He continued to live at Easton Maudit for twenty-nine years, though appointed Dean of Carlisle in 1778. In 1782 he was consecrated Bishop of Dromore, County Down, where he resided until his death, which took place on 30th September, 1811. He was a well-loved and conscientious bishop.

Percy was not particularly distinguished at the university, but soon after his appointment to Easton Maudit, diversified the monotony of his secluded parish by various literary and antiquarian studies. He translated a Chinese novel from the Portuguese, and published a Chinese miscellany, *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry, translated from the Islandic (sic) Language* (1763), *Northern Antiquities* (1770), and one or two theological books. His fame, however, rests entirely upon his *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, which was published in 1765. This book became widely popular, and did more, perhaps,

than any other single publication to bring about the Romantic Revival. Its influence upon Scott, Coleridge, and Wordsworth cannot easily be exaggerated. Literature owes a deep debt to Percy as the first popularizer of our old ballads; as an editor his faults are "too evident for detection, and too gross for aggravation". He said that he based his collection on a MS., written about 1650, which he found "lying dirty on the floor under a Bureau in the Parlour" of his friend Humphrey Pitt of Shiffnal, in Shropshire, "being used by the maids to light the fire". As a matter of fact, of the 176 pieces in the *Reliques*, only 45 are taken from what is now known as "Bishop Percy's Folio Manuscript", and many of them are sophisticated almost beyond recognition. He did not scruple to add and alter in order to confer what he considered to be "elegance" on the ancient poems, and in his Preface half apologized for bestowing so much attention upon a parcel of old Ballads. It is quite possible that if Percy had presented the public with a scientifically edited text, his book would not have been popular. As it was, it awakened a keen and widespread interest in our older poetry, and gave a deadly wound to poetry of the artificial school. Percy's MS. was edited by J. W. Hales and F. J. Furnivall in 1867-1868.

[A. C. C. Gausson, *Percy: Prelate and Poet.*]

Reliques of Ancient English Poetry

GENTLE HEARDSMAN, TELL TO ME

(Percy's Contributions are in italics)

Gentle heardsman, tell to me,
Of curtesy I thee pray,
Unto the towne of Walsingham
Which is the right and ready way?

“Unto the towne of Walsingham
The way is hard for to be gon;
And verrey crooked are those pathes
For you to find out all alone.”

Weere the miles doubled thrise,
And the way never soe ill,
Itt were not enough for mine offence;
Itt is soe grievous and soe ill.

“Thy yeares are young, thy face is faire,
Thy witts are weake, thy thoughts are greene;
Time hath not given thee leave, as yett,
For to committ so great a sinne.”

Yes, heardsman, yes, soe wouldst thou say,
If thou knewest soe much as I;
My witts, and thoughts, and all the rest,
Have well deserved for to dye.

I am not what I seeme to bee,
My clothes and sexe doe differ farr:
I am a woman, woe is me!
Born to greeffe and irksome care.

*For my beloved, and well-beloved,
My wayward cruelty could kill:
And though my teares will nought avail,
Most dearly I bewail him still.*

*He was the flower of noble wights,
None ever more sincere colde bee;
Of comely mien and shape hee was,
And tenderlye hee loved mee.*

THOMAS PERCY

*When thus I saw he loved me well,
I grewe so proud his paine to see,
That I, who did not know myselfe,
Thought scorne of such a youth as hee.*

And grew soe coy and nice to please,
As women's lookes are often soe,
He might not kisse, nor hand forsooth,
Unlesse I willed him soe to doe.

Thus being wearyed with delayes
To see I pittied not his greeffe,
He gott him to a secrett place,
And there he dyed without releeffe.

And for his sake these weeds I weare,
And sacrifice my tender age;
And every day Ile begg my bread,
To undergo this pilgrimage.

Thus every day I fast and pray,
And ever will doe till I dye;
And gett me to some secrett place,
For soe did hee, and soe will I.

Now, gentle heardsman, aske no more;
But keepe my secretts I thee pray;
Unto the towne of Walsingham
Shew me the right and ready way.

"Now goe thy wayes, and God before!
For he must ever guide thee still:
Turne downe that dale, the right hand path,
And soe, faire pilgrim, fare thee well!"

JAMES MACPHERSON

(1736 – 1796)

JAMES MACPHERSON was born at Ruthven, Inverness-shire, on 27th October, 1736. His father was an impecunious but well-connected farmer. He was educated at the

district school in Badenoch, at King's and Marischal Colleges, Aberdeen, and at Edinburgh University. He did not take a degree either at Aberdeen or Edinburgh;

he intended to enter the Church, but became a village schoolmaster and afterwards a private tutor. He cherished precocious literary ambitions, and is said to have written over four thousand verses before he left college. His first published poem, *The Highlander* (1758), in six cantos, was a failure. While acting as tutor to Thomas Graham of Balgowan, the future Lord Lynedoch and victor of Barossa, he met John Home, the author of *Douglas*, who persuaded him to collect and translate certain fragments of Gaelic poetry. With some misgivings he published *Fragments of Ancient Poetry collected in the Highlands* in 1760. The book was a notable success, and its reception encouraged Macpherson to publish *Fingal*, an epic poem in six books, in 1762, and *Temora*, in eight books, in 1763, both poems purporting to be the work of Ossian, a legendary bard of the third century A.D. Before publishing these poems, Macpherson travelled widely in the Highlands and Isles to collect material, being backed financially by the Faculty of Advocates and by other Edinburgh gentlemen. Opinions differ as to the amount of material he gathered on his journeys; he undoubtedly gathered a good deal of local colour, and something of the spirit if little of the letter of the old Gaelic writings. "Ossian" proved to be one of the most influential books of the second half of the eighteenth century. In spite of Johnson's fulminations, it was translated into all the principal European languages, and put £1200 into Macpherson's pocket. The rest of Macpherson's life, though unimportant from the

literary point of view, was, materially speaking, a complete success. He was appointed secretary to the Governor of Pensacola, West Florida, in 1764, returning home two years later with his salary converted into a pension. He wrote various historical works and political tracts, crossing swords with Junius, and receiving £3000 for his *History of England*, a Jacobite work covering the years 1660 to 1714. His translation of the *Iliad* into "Ossianic" prose (1773) lowered his literary reputation, but did not put him out of favour with the Government. He wrote pamphlets on the American situation, supervised the Government's newspapers, was appointed London agent to the Nabob of Arcot, enriched himself, became a member of Parliament, and bought an estate in Badenoch, where he died on 17th February, 1796, after playing the rôle of a kindly laird for some years. By his own direction, he was buried in Westminster Abbey; aptly enough, his grave is not far from Poets' Corner.

The Ossianic controversy, in its magnitude and intricacy, is the literary equivalent of the Tichborne Case. The dust of the combat—the last of the battles between Celt and Saxon—has now somewhat subsided, and certain facts are now established with almost complete certainty. It is certain that Macpherson made up more than half of the "Ossianic" poems out of his own head. (A mathematically-minded editor gives Macpherson's share as five-eighths.) It is certain that some Gaelic poems were still being orally transmitted when Macpherson went on his expeditions to the Highlands, and

that he made use of some of this material, though he was greatly hampered by an insufficient knowledge of Gaelic. It is certain that the "originals" of the poems, published eleven years after Macpherson's death, were mere renderings of Macpherson's English into faulty modern Gaelic. Macpherson, in short, was an impostor with literary skill, and the Ossianic poems may be regarded as substantially his work. The Celtic party, forced to acknowledge these facts, now holds its last line of defence, and claims that Macpherson, though a bit of a malefactor, was a great original poet. *Sibi iudicet lector*: that question can at any rate be settled without exhaustive research. To the present writer the Ossianic poems appear quite unreadable. But whatever their value as literature, there is no

doubt about their importance in literary history. They supplied European literature with exactly what it wanted. They made a particular appeal to the Man of Feeling, who was becoming a fashionable character. They brought into literature "the lone shieling and the misty island" and various other Celtic stage-properties. Better still, they did more than any other book to drive away the poetry of the town and the drawing-room, and restore the poetry of "old, unhappy, far-off things, and battles long ago". Finally, they turned the attention of the learned world to the Highlands, and so led to a knowledge of genuine Gaelic poetry.

[J. S. Smart, *James Macpherson: an Episode in Literature*; T. B. Saunders, *The Life and Letters of James Macpherson*.]

From "Fingal"

BOOK II

COMAL AND GALBINA

Comal was a son of Albion; the chief of an hundred hills! His deer drunk of a thousand streams. A thousand rocks replied to the voice of his dogs. His face was the mildness of youth. His hand the death of heroes. One was his love, and fair was she! the daughter of mighty Conloch. She appeared like a sunbeam among women. Her hair was the wing of the raven. Her dogs were taught to the chase. Her bowstring sounded on the winds. Her soul was fixed on Comal. Often met their eyes of love. Their course in the chase was one. Happy were their words in secret. But Grumal loved the maid, the dark chief of the gloomy Ardven. He watched her lone steps in the heath; the foe of unhappy Comal!

One day, tired of the chase, when the mist had concealed their friends, Comal and the daughter of Conloch met, in the cave of Ronan. It was the wonted haunt of Comal. Its sides were hung with his arms. A hundred shields of thongs were there; a hundred helms of sounding steel. "Rest

here," he said, "my love, Galbina; thou light of the cave of Ronan! A deer appears on Mora's brow. I go; but I will soon return." "I fear," she said, "dark Grumal my foe: he haunts the cave of Ronan! I will rest among the arms; but soon return, my love."

He went to the deer of Mora. The daughter of Conloch would try his love. She clothed her fair sides with his armour; she strode from the cave of Ronan! He thought it was his foe. His heart beat high. His colour changed, and darkness dimmed his eyes. He drew the bow. The arrow flew. Galbina fell in blood! He ran with wildness in his steps: he called the daughter of Conloch. No answer in the lonely rock. Where art thou O my love? He saw, at length, her heaving heart, beating around the arrow he threw. "O Conloch's daughter, is it thou?" He sunk upon her breast! The hunters found the hapless pair; he afterwards walked the hill. But many and silent were his steps round the dark dwelling of his love. The fleet of the ocean came. He fought, the strangers fled. He searched for death along the field. But who could slay the mighty Comall! He threw away his dark-brown shield. An arrow found his manly breast. He sleeps with his loved Galbina at the noise of the sounding surge! Their green tombs are seen by the mariner, when he bounds on the waves of the north.

THOMAS CHATTERTON

(1752 - 1770)

THOMAS CHATTERTON was born at Bristol on 20th November, 1752. His father, a poor schoolmaster, had died in the previous August. His forefathers, for several generations, had been hereditary sextons of the beautiful old church of St. Mary Redcliffe, and the sexton during Chatterton's childhood was his uncle, so he had freedom to wander at will in the church, and explored all its recesses, including the muniment room, with its chests of ancient manuscripts. Chatterton was educated at Colston's Hospital, a blue-coat school, but lived in a dream-world of his own, which was peopled by William Canynge (?1399-1474), an actual mayor of

Bristol and the rebuilder of St. Mary Redcliffe, and by several imaginary characters, of whom the chief was Thomas Rowley, a monk and poet. He began to write poetry when ten years old, and wrote with great fluency and competence. He fabricated a pedigree for an ambitious Bristol pewterer, and, about 1765, commenced to write poems which he attributed to Rowley, and which he composed in what he considered to be fifteenth-century English—a curious lingo of "Ye Olde Englyssche Inne" variety, for the writing of which he compiled a glossary. In 1767 he was apprenticed to one Lambert, an attorney, who was a hard and

unsympathetic master. His duties, however, did not prevent him from continuing to write the Works of Rowley, penning "a stanza when he should engross". He wrote *The Bristowe Tragedie*, the *Challenge to Lydgate*, *The Songe to Ælla*, and many other poems. He sent to Horace Walpole *The Ryse of Peyncteynge in Englande*, which Walpole at first accepted as genuine, but after consulting with Gray and Mason, rejected as a fabrication. In April, 1770, Chatterton was dismissed by Lambert for writing an ironical last will and testament. He at once decided to go to London and endeavour to earn a living with his pen. His extreme literary fluency and his ability to write on almost every subject and in a dozen different styles were good qualifications, but he was disqualified by his pride and by a certain morbidity of temperament. At first he was moderately successful in placing his work, though he was miserably underpaid; if he had had a little capital behind him, he would almost certainly have won fame and a competence. He wrote squibs, tales, songs, letters on the "Junius" model, and *The Revenge: a Burletta*. Then his luck changed. His patron, Lord Mayor Beckford, died; the slack season came on; his political writings were rejected. He was unable to obtain food, and poisoned himself by swallowing arsenic on 24th August, 1770.

Chatterton's early and tragic death, his great precocity (unequalled in the literary history not only of England, but of the world), and the controversy which long raged round the "Rowley poems", have undoubtedly given an ad-

ventitious interest to his writings. Chatterton was an accomplished writer, but not a very accomplished forger; that he deceived the pundits of the Society of Antiquaries was due to their ignorance rather than to his skill. There were, however, still a few believers in the genuineness of the "Rowley poems" (just as there are still believers in Joanna Southcott), until Skeat published his essay in 1871. No one now believes in the existence of Rowley; that his legend was (like the other "old Rowley") an unconscionable time in dying is a striking commentary on the condition of English philology. It is impossible to speak in too strong terms of Chatterton's precocity, which is simply without parallel, or of the potentialities of his genius. What he actually wrote has sometimes been overvalued, though some of his poems, notably *The Songe to Ælla* and *An Excelente Balade of Charitie*, are beautiful. Rowley and Lydgate were supposed to have been poetical rivals; but there is no doubt that the fictitious monk of Bristol was vastly superior to the historical monk of Bury. This may be granted, without bracketing Chatterton with Keats, or exaggerating his influence on the Romantic Revival or on the development of English metre. His influence on later poets was not very great; but the Rowley controversy played no small part in reviving an interest in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

[J. H. Ingram, *The True Chatterton*; C. E. Russell, *Thomas Chatterton, the Marvellous Boy*; E. H. W. Meyerstein, *A Life of Thomas Chatterton*.]

The Romaunte of the Cnyghte

The Sunne ento Vyrgyne was gotten,
 The floureys al arounde onsprynge,
 The woddie Grasse blaunched the Fenne,
 The Quenis Ermyne arised fro Bedde;
 Syr Knyghte dyd ymounte oponn a Stede
 Ne Rouncie ne Drybblette of make,
 Thanne asterte for dur'sie dede
 Wythe Morglaie hys Foomenne to make blede;
 Eke swythyn as wynde Trees, theyre Hartys to shake.
 Al downe in a Delle, a merke dernie Delle,
 Wheere Coppys eke Thighe Trees there bee,
 There dyd hee perchaunce Isee
 A Damoselle askedde for ayde on her kne,
 An Cnyghte uncourteous dydde bie her stonde,
 Hee hollyd herr faeste bie her honde.
 "Discourteous Cnyghte, I doe praie nowe thou telle
 Why doeste thou bee so (harsh) to thee Damselle?"
 The Knyghte hym assoled eftsoones,
 "Itte beethe ne mattere of thyne.
 Begon, for I wayte notte thye boones."

The Knyghte sed, "I proove on thie Gaberdyne."
 Alyche Boars enchafed to fyghte heie flies,
 The Discoourteous Knyghte bee strynge, botte strynger the righte,
 The dynne bee heree a myle for fuire in the fyghte,
 Tyl thee false Knyghte yfallethe and dyes.
 "Damoysel," quod the Knyghte, "now comee thou wi me."
 "Y wotte welle," quod shee, "I nede thee ne fere.
 The Knyghte yfallen badd wolde Ischulde bee,
 Butte loe he ys dedde, maie itte spede Heaven-were."

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS

(1723 - 1792)

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS was born
 at Plympton-Earl's, Devonshire, on
 16th July, 1723. His father was a
 schoolmaster and clergyman. He
 was educated at his father's school,

and in 1740 was apprenticed to
 Thomas Hudson, a Devonshire man
 then popular in London as a portrait-
 painter. Subsequently he studied
 in Italy for three years. He re-

turned to London in 1753, and soon became the most fashionable portrait-painter and the acknowledged head of his profession. In 1768, on the foundation of the Royal Academy, he was chosen president, and received the honour of knighthood; and in 1784 he was appointed principal portrait-painter to the king. He was the intimate friend of Dr. Johnson, Goldsmith, Garrick, Burke, and the others of that coterie; he was mainly responsible for founding "The Club" in 1764. He died on 23rd February, 1792. Reynolds, though hampered by deafness, was a man of great social gifts, and endeared himself to all who knew him by his tact and imperturbability. The best portrait of Reynolds's character is that given by Goldsmith in *Retaliation* (see p. 225).

As president of the Royal Academy, Reynolds delivered fifteen

addresses between 1769 and 1790. These addresses were collected and published in 1797 as *Discourses on Painting*. They are models of art criticism, and have become a classic. Though they deal with a technical subject, they can be read by anyone with profit and pleasure, and their common-sense principles can, *mutatis mutandis*, be applied to the art of writing as well as to the art of painting. They are so well written that contemporary gossip said, quite falsely, that Johnson and Burke must have had a main hand in their composition. Art criticism is seldom written by one who, like Reynolds, combines the knowledge and experience of a master with the modesty that should be shown by an apprentice.

[Sir W. Armstrong, *Sir Joshua Reynolds, First President of the Royal Academy*.]

Discourses on Painting

FROM DISCOURSE II

I flatter myself, that from the long experience I have had and the unceasing assiduity with which I have pursued those studies, in which, like you, I have been engaged, I shall be acquitted of vanity in offering some hints to your consideration. They are indeed in a great degree founded upon my own mistakes in the same pursuit. But the history of errors, properly managed, often shortens the road to truth. And although no method of study that I can offer, will of itself conduct to excellence, yet it may preserve industry from being misapplied.

In speaking to you of the theory of art, I shall only consider it as it has a relation to the *method* of your studies.

Dividing the study of painting into three distinct periods, I shall address you as having passed through the first of them, which is confined to the rudiments; including a facility of drawing any object that presents itself, a tolerable readiness in the management of colours, and an acquaintance with the most simple and obvious rules of composition.

This first degree of proficiency is, in painting, what grammar is in literature, a general preparation for whatever species of the art the student

may afterwards choose for his more particular application. The power of drawing, modelling, and using colours, is very properly called the language of the art; and in this language, the honours you have just received prove you to have made no inconsiderable progress.

When the artist is once enabled to express himself with some degree of correctness, he must then endeavour to collect subjects for expression; to amass a stock of ideas, to be combined and varied as occasion may require. He is now in the second period of study, in which his business is to learn all that has been known and done before his own time. Having hitherto received instructions from a particular master, he is now to consider the Art itself as his master. He must extend his capacity to more sublime and general instructions. Those perfections which lie scattered among various masters are now united in one general idea, which is henceforth to regulate his taste and enlarge his imagination. With a variety of models thus before him, he will avoid that narrowness and poverty of conception which attends a bigoted admiration of a single master, and will cease to follow any favourite where he ceases to excel. This period, is, however, still a time of subjection and discipline. Though the student will not resign himself blindly to any single authority, when he may have the advantage of consulting many, he must still be afraid of trusting his own judgment, and of deviating into any track where he cannot find the footsteps of some former master.

The third and last period emancipates the student from subjection to any authority but what he shall himself judge to be supported by reason. Confiding now in his own judgment, he will consider and separate those different principles to which different modes of beauty owe their original. In the former period he sought only to know and combine excellence, wherever it was to be found, into one idea of perfection: in this he learns what requires the most attentive survey, and the most subtle disquisition, to discriminate perfections that are incompatible with each other.

He is from this time to regard himself as holding the same rank with those masters whom he before obeyed as teachers; and as exercising a sort of sovereignty over those rules which have hitherto restrained him. Comparing now no longer the performances of art with each other, but examining the art itself by the standard of nature, he corrects what is erroneous, supplies what is scanty, and adds, by his own observation, what the industry of his predecessors may have yet left wanting to perfection. Having well established his judgment, and stored his memory, he may now without fear try the power of his imagination. The mind that has been thus disciplined, may be indulged in the warmest enthusiasm, and venture to play on the borders of the wildest extravagance. The habitual dignity which long converse with the greatest minds has imparted to him, will display itself in all his attempts; and he will stand among his instructors, not as an imitator, but a rival.

These are the different stages of the art. But as I now address myself particularly to those students who have been this day rewarded for their happy passage through the first period, I can with no propriety suppose they want any help in the initiatory studies. My present design is to direct your view to distant excellence, and to show you the readiest path that leads to it. Of this I shall speak with such latitude as may leave the province of the professor uninvaded, and shall not anticipate those precepts which it is his business to give and your duty to understand.

It is indisputably evident that a great part of every man's life must be employed in collecting materials for the exercise of genius. Invention, strictly speaking, is little more than a new combination of those images which have been previously gathered and deposited in the memory; nothing can come of nothing; he who has laid up no materials can produce no combinations.

A student unacquainted with the attempts of former adventurers, is always apt to overrate his own abilities; to mistake the most trifling excursions for discoveries of moment, and every coast new to him for a new-found country. If by chance he passes beyond his usual limits, he congratulates his own arrival at those regions which they who have steered a better course have long left behind them.

The productions of such minds are seldom distinguished by an air of originality; they are anticipated in their happiest efforts; and if they are found to differ in anything from their predecessors, it is only in irregular sallies and trifling conceits. The more extensive, therefore, your acquaintance is with the works of those who have excelled, the more extensive will be your powers of invention; and what may appear still more like a paradox, the more original will be your conceptions. But the difficulty on this occasion is to determine what ought to be proposed as models of excellence, and who ought to be considered as the properest guides.

To a young man just arrived in Italy, many of the present painters of that country are ready enough to obtrude their precepts, and to offer their own performances as examples of that perfection which they affect to recommend. The modern, however, who recommends himself as a standard, may justly be suspected as ignorant of the true end, and unacquainted with the proper object, of the art which he professes. To follow such a guide, will not only retard the student, but mislead him.

On whom, then, can he rely, or who shall show him the path that leads to excellence? The answer is obvious: those great masters who have travelled the same road with success, are the most likely to conduct others. The works of those who have stood the test of ages have a claim to that respect and veneration to which no modern can pretend. The duration and stability of their fame is sufficient to evince that it has not been suspended upon the slender thread of fashion and caprice, but bound to the human heart by every tie of sympathetic approbation.

ADAM SMITH

(1723 – 1790)

ADAM SMITH was born at Kirkcaldy on 5th June, 1723. He was the posthumous son of the controller of customs at Kirkcaldy. After leaving Kirkcaldy school, he proceeded in 1737 to the University of Glasgow; in 1740 he went as a Snell Exhibitioner to Balliol College, Oxford, where he graduated B.A. in 1744. In 1751 he was appointed professor of logic at Glasgow, and in the next year professor of moral philosophy at the same university. His first publication, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, appeared in 1759, and was most favourably received. To this work he afterwards added an *Essay on the Origin of Languages*. In 1764 he attended the young Duke of Buccleuch on his travels, and during a long stay in France became acquainted with Turgot, Necker, D'Alembert, and others. On his return to Scotland in 1766 he retired with his mother to Kirkcaldy, where, after ten years of close study, he wrote his celebrated

Enquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations (1776). This work may be deemed the formal precursor of the modern science of economics; it superseded and rendered obsolete several works on kindred subjects. About two years later he obtained the lucrative post of commissioner of customs in Scotland. In 1787 he was chosen rector of Glasgow University. He died on 17th July, 1790.

The Wealth of Nations is, for students of economics, a book of the first importance. It stands, for them, in a position analogous to that of *The Origin of Species* for biologists. From the purely literary point of view, it has the merit (no small one in a book of that kind) of being readable. Its style is clear and business-like, sometimes homely and colloquial, and at times somewhat colourless.

[Viscount Haldane, *Adam Smith*; F. W. Hirst, *Adam Smith* (English Men of Letters Series); John Rae, *Life of Adam Smith*.]

From "The Wealth of Nations"

BOOK I. CHAP. IV

When the division of labour has been once thoroughly established, it is but a very small part of a man's wants which the produce of his own labour can supply. He supplies the far greater part of them by exchanging that surplus part of the produce of his own labour, which is over and above his own consumption, for such parts of the produce of other men's labour as he has occasion for. Every man thus lives by exchanging, or becomes in some measure a merchant, and the society itself grows to be what is properly a commercial society.

But when the division of labour first began to take place, this power of exchanging must frequently have been very much clogged and embarrassed in its operations. One man, we shall suppose, has more of a certain commodity than he himself has occasion for, while another has less. The former consequently would be glad to dispose of, and the latter to purchase, a part of this superfluity. But if this latter should chance to have nothing that the former stands in need of, no exchange can be made between them. The butcher has more meat in his shop than he himself can consume, and the brewer and the baker would each of them be willing to purchase a part of it. But they have nothing to offer in exchange, except the different productions of their respective trades, and the butcher is already provided with all the bread and beer which he has immediate occasion for. No exchange can, in this case, be made between them. He cannot be their merchant, nor they his customers; and they are all of them thus mutually less serviceable to one another. In order to avoid the inconveniency of such situations, every prudent man in every period of society, after the first establishment of the division of labour, must naturally have endeavoured to manage his affairs in such a manner, as to have at all times by him, besides the peculiar produce of his own industry, a certain quantity of some one commodity or other, such as he imagined few people would be likely to refuse in exchange for the produce of their industry.

Many different commodities, it is probable, were successively both thought of and employed for this purpose. In the rude ages of society, cattle are said to have been the common instrument of commerce; and, though they must have been a most inconvenient one, yet in old times we find things were frequently valued according to the number of cattle which had been given in exchange for them. The armour of Diomede, says Homer, cost only nine oxen; but that of Glaucus cost an hundred oxen. Salt is said to be the common instrument of commerce and exchanges in Abyssinia; a species of shells in some parts of the coast of India; dried cod at Newfoundland; tobacco in Virginia; sugar in some of our West India colonies; and there is at this day a village in Scotland where it is not uncommon, I am told, for a workman to carry nails instead of money to the baker's shop or the ale-house.

In all countries, however, men seem at last to have been determined by irresistible reasons to give the preference, for this employment, to metals above every other commodity. Metals can not only be kept with as little loss as any other commodity, scarce any thing being less perishable than they are, but they can likewise, without any loss, be divided into any number of parts; as by fusion those parts can easily be reunited again; a quality which no other equally durable commodities possess, and which more than any other quality renders them fit to be the instruments of commerce and circulation. The man who wanted to buy salt, for example, and had nothing but cattle to give in exchange for it, must have been

obliged to buy salt to the value of a whole ox, or a whole sheep at a time. He could seldom buy less than this, because what he was to give for it could seldom be divided without loss; and if he had a mind to buy more, he must, for the same reasons, have been obliged to buy double or triple the quantity, the value, to wit, of two or three oxen, or of two or three sheep. If, on the contrary, instead of sheep or oxen, he had metals to give in exchange for it, he could easily proportion the quantity of the metal to the precise quantity of the commodity which he had immediate occasion for.

Different metals have been made use of by different nations for this purpose. Iron was the common instrument of commerce among the ancient Spartans; copper among the ancient Romans; and gold and silver among all rich and commercial nations.

Those metals seem originally to have been made use of for this purpose in rude bars, without any stamp or coinage. Thus we are told by Pliny, upon the authority of Timæus, an ancient historian, that, till the time of Servius Tullius, the Romans had no coined money, but made use of unstamped bars of copper, to purchase whatever they had occasion for. These rude bars, therefore, performed at this time the function of money.

The use of metals in this rude state was attended with two very considerable inconveniencies; first, with the trouble of weighing; and, secondly, with that of assaying them. In the precious metals, where a small difference in the quantity makes a great difference in the value, even the business of weighing, with proper exactness, requires at least very accurate weights and scales. The weighing of gold in particular is an operation of some nicety. In the coarser metals, indeed, where a small error would be of little consequence, less accuracy would, no doubt, be necessary. Yet we find it excessively troublesome, if every time a poor man had occasion to buy or sell a farthing's worth of goods, he was obliged to weigh the farthing. The operation of assaying is still more difficult, still more tedious, and, unless a part of the metal is fairly melted in the crucible, with proper dissolvents, any conclusion that can be drawn from it is extremely uncertain. Before the institution of coined money, however, unless they went through this tedious and difficult operation, people must always have been liable to the grossest frauds and impositions, and instead of a pound weight of pure silver, or pure copper, might receive in exchange for their goods an adulterated composition of the coarsest and cheapest materials, which had, however, in their outward appearance, been made to resemble those metals. To prevent such abuses, to facilitate exchanges, and thereby to encourage all sorts of industry and commerce, it has been found necessary, in all countries that have made any considerable advances towards improvement, to affix a public stamp upon certain quantities of such particular metals, as were in those countries commonly made use of to purchase goods. Hence the origin of coined money, and of those public offices

called mints; institutions exactly of the same nature with those of the aulnagers and stampmasters of woollen and linen cloth. All of them are equally meant to ascertain, by means of a public stamp, the quantity and uniform goodness of those different commodities when brought to market.

CHARLES CHURCHILL

(1731 - 1764)

CHARLES CHURCHILL was born in Vine Street, Westminster, in February, 1731. His father was rector of Rainham, Essex, and curate and lecturer of St. John's, Westminster. He was educated at Westminster and at St. John's College, Cambridge, where his career was cut short by a Fleet marriage to a highly unsuitable girl. Churchill was ordained deacon in 1754, and held a curacy in Somerset. In 1756 he was ordained priest, and took his father's curacy at Rainham; when his father died two years later, he succeeded him in his curacy and lectureship at St. John's, Westminster. He eked out his scanty income by opening a school of his own, and by teaching in a ladies' seminary. He was singularly unfitted to be a clergyman or a schoolmaster, being by nature a coarse and riotous Bohemian. In 1761 a crisis occurred in his affairs. He went bankrupt, obtained a separation from his wife, and practically (as much as the indelibility of orders permitted) ceased to be a clergyman, though his resignation was not formally tendered until 1763. In 1761 he also began his poetical career, for his previous effusions are of no account. *The Rosciad*, a pungent satire on the actors and actresses

of the day, made him at once famous and dreaded; he never wrote anything better than this poem, though his output in the three years of life which remained to him was very great. His other works include *Night*; *The Ghost*, in which Dr. Johnson is satirized as Pomposo; *The Prophecy of Famine*, directed against the Scots; *An Epistle to W. Hogarth*; *The Conference*; *The Duellist*; *The Candidate*; *The Times*; and *The Journey*. Churchill became the ardent friend of Wilkes and contributed frequently to *The North Briton*. He died at Boulogne, while visiting Wilkes, on the 4th November, 1764.

Churchill's success was nearly as short-lived as it was sudden. Hailed in 1761 as the peer of Dryden and Pope, he was soon forgotten, and is nowadays little read. His satires, indeed, entitle him to rank as a verse-pamphleteer rather than as a poet. Their success was due at least as much to their bad as to their good qualities; to their personalities, their truculence, and their malignity at least as much as to their vigour. Churchill wrote too much, and was often poor and clumsy; he wrote himself out in three years and lived himself out in thirty-three. Yet his heroic couplets have something of Dryden's

fire, and he can handle his octosyllabics with something of Butler's skill. Like most "men about town", he was profoundly ignorant of the world, and so was disqualified to become a first-rate satirist. Some-

times the energy of his lines, especially noticeable in that age of starched and academic poetry, compensates for his ephemeral subjects and his loud-mouthed vulgarity.

From "The Rosciad"

Last Garrick came.—Behind him throng a train
Of snarling critics, ignorant as vain.

One finds out,—“He's of stature somewhat low—
Your hero always should be tall you know—,
True natural greatness all consists in height”,
Produce your voucher, Critic—“Serjeant Kite”

Another can't forgive the paltry arts
By which he makes his way to shallow hearts;
Mere pieces of finesse, traps for applause.—
“Avaunt! unnatural start, affected pause.”

For me, by Nature form'd to judge with phlegm,
I can't acquit by wholesale, nor condemn.
The best things carried to excess are wrong;
The start may be too frequent, pause too long;
But, only used in proper time and place,
Severest judgment must allow them grace.

If bunglers, form'd on Imitation's plan,
Just in the way that monkeys mimic man,
Their copied scene with mangled arts disgrace,
And pause and start with the same vacant face,
We join the critic laugh; those tricks we scorn,
Which spoil the scenes they mean them to adorn;
But when, from Nature's pure and genuine source,
These strokes of acting flow with generous force,
When in the features all the soul's portray'd,
And passions, such as Garrick's, are display'd,
To me they seem from quickest feelings caught,
Each start is nature, and each pause is thought.

When reason yields to passion's wild alarms,
And the whole state of man is up in arms,
What but a critic could condemn the player,
For pausing here, when cool sense pauses there?
Whilst, working from the heart, the fire I trace,
And mark it strongly flaming to the face;
Whilst in each sound I hear the very man,

I can't catch words, and pity those who can.

Let wits, like spiders, from the tortured brain;
 Fine-draw the critic-web with curious pain;
 The gods,—a kindness I with thanks must pay,—
 Have form'd me of a coarser kind of clay;
 Nor stung with envy, nor with spleen diseased,
 A poor dull creature, still with Nature pleased:
 Hence to thy praises, Garrick, I agree,
 And, pleased with Nature, must be pleased with thee.

"JUNIUS"

(? 1740 — ? 1818)

THE series of seventy letters which were signed "Junius" first appeared in *The Public Advertiser*, a London paper published by Woodfall, from which they were copied into most of the other journals of the time. The earliest is dated 21st January, 1769; the last, 21st January, 1772. After they were completed they were collected and published by H. S. Woodfall, with a dedication to the English nation and a preface by the author. Other letters bearing the same characteristics, but having different signatures, appeared between 28th April, 1767, and 12th May, 1772, and are given in the younger Woodfall's edition as the "Miscellaneous Letters". This edition was published in 1812 in three volumes, and included Junius's private letters to H. S. Woodfall. The mystery of the authorship of these letters is still unsolved, and the identity of Junius is a problem as insoluble as that of the Man in the Iron Mask, or of Datchery in *Edwin Drood*. There are at least forty-six persons for whom the authorship has been

claimed; many of these claims are quite absurd, and most are unsupported by a shred of evidence. The best case can be made out for the identity of Junius with Sir Philip Francis; in fact the evidence for his authorship, which cannot even be summarized here, is more conclusive than that which has preceded many a verdict of "Guilty" in a court of law. There are, however, or certainly there were, strong opponents of the Franciscan claims; it may be added that the acrimony of the controversy is, as frequently happens, in inverse proportion to its importance. The most suitable verdict on Francis is, perhaps, the Scottish verdict of "Not proven", which releases his person, but stains his character.

Sir Philip was born on 22nd October, 1740, at Dublin. His father, who bore the same name, was the author of a once-celebrated translation of Horace. He was educated at St. Paul's, and became, at the age of sixteen, a junior clerk in the office of the Secretary of State. He was afterwards secre-

tary in turn to General Edward Bligh, Lord Kinnoul, and Pitt; from 1762 to 1772 he was first clerk at the War Office. In 1774 he became one of the four newly-appointed councillors of the Governor-General of India. He opposed Warren Hastings at every turn; their quarrel was bitter, and eventually became *non verba sed verbera*, for Hastings wounded him severely in a duel in 1779. In the following year Francis returned to England, having enriched himself by means of a judicious combination of whist and parsimony. He sat in Parliament for many years, took a prominent part in the impeachment of Warren Hastings, became a friend of the Regent, entertained hopes of being appointed Governor-General of India, but was merely made a K.C.B., and died on the 23rd December, 1818. Two years before his death a book was published which identified him with Junius; he neither confessed his guilt nor pleaded his innocence, but equivocated much as Scott did when taxed with the authorship of the "Waverley Novels".

The Letters of Junius owed their original fame to their rancour, and to the fact that they were written by a spy who had access to inside information. Their present fame, such as it is, is mainly due to the mystery which surrounds their authorship. For many years they were considered masterpieces of style and repositories of sound political thought of the "civil and

religious liberty" school. The unbiased reader will not find much to admire in the polished oratorical style; and the political ideas expressed in the *Letters* are extremely shallow. Even their admirers must confess that their subject-matter is hardly of permanent interest. They have all the vices of anonymous journalism, except a vicious style; they are full of personalities, invective, and slander, and are obviously inspired by "blindness of heart, pride, vain-glory and hypocrisy, envy, hatred and malice and all uncharitableness". These qualities can be read between the lines of the biographies of Francis, who was a haughty and embittered man. He seems to have borne the success of others and his own ill-success with all the malignity of Iago; indeed the motives which inspired him (if he was Junius) to attack the Dukes of Grafton and Bedford were not unlike those which caused Iago to frame his diabolical plot. A perusal of much of the available evidence has convinced the present writer that Junius was *aut Franciscus aut diabolus*. Perhaps it would be more correct to say that the devil wrote the letters and that Sir Philip Francis was his chosen instrument.

[H. R. Francis, *Junius Revealed*; C. Chabot, *The Handwriting of Junius professionally investigated*; C. W. Dilke, *Papers of a Critic*; A. Hayward, *More about Junius. The Franciscan theory unsound*; C. W. Everett, *The Letters of Junius*.]

From "Letter XLIX"

TO HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF GRAFTON

MY LORD,

June 22, 1771.

The profound respect I bear to the gracious prince who governs this country with no less honour to himself than satisfaction to his subjects, and who restores you to your rank under his standard, will save you from a multitude of reproaches. The attention I should have paid to your failings is involuntarily attracted to the hand that rewards them; and though I am not so partial to the royal judgment as to affirm that the favour of a king can remove mountains of infamy, it serves to lessen at least, for undoubtedly it divides, the burden. While I remember how much is due to *his* sacred character, I cannot, with any decent appearance of propriety, call you the meanest and the basest fellow in the kingdom. I protest, my Lord, I do not think you so. You will have a dangerous rival in that kind of fame to which you have hitherto so happily directed your ambition, as long as there is one man living who thinks you worthy of his confidence, and fit to be trusted with any share in his government. I confess you have great intrinsic merit, but take care you do not value it too highly; consider how much of it would have been lost to the world, if the king had not graciously affixed his stamp, and given it currency among his subjects. If it be true that a virtuous man, struggling with adversity, be a scene worthy of the gods, the glorious contention between you and the best of princes deserves a circle equally attentive and respectable; I think I already see other gods rising from the earth to behold it.

But this language is too mild for the occasion. The king is determined that our abilities shall not be lost to society. The perpetration and description of new crimes will find employment for us both. My Lord, if the persons who have been loudest in their professions of patriotism had done their duty to the public with the same zeal and perseverance that I did, I will not assert that government would have recovered its dignity, but at least our gracious sovereign must have spared his subjects this last insult, which, if there be any feeling left among us, they will resent more than even the real injuries they received from every measure of your Grace's administration. In vain would he have looked round him for another character so consummate as yours. Lord Mansfield shrinks from his principles, his ideas of government perhaps go farther than your own, but his heart disgraces the theory of his understanding. Charles Fox is yet in blossom; and as for Mr. Wedderburne, there is something about him which even treachery cannot trust; for the present therefore, the best of princes must have contented himself with Lord Sandwich. You would long since have received your final dismissal and reward; and I, my Lord, who do not esteem you the more for the high office you possess,

would willingly have followed you to your retirement. There is surely something singularly benevolent in the character of our sovereign. From the moment he ascended the throne there is no crime of which human nature is capable (and I call upon the recorder to witness it), that has not appeared venial in his sight. With any other prince, the shameful desertion of him in the midst of that distress, which you alone had created, in the very crisis of danger, when he fancied he saw the throne already surrounded by men of virtue and abilities, would have outweighed the memory of your former services. But his Majesty is full of justice, and understands the doctrine of compensations; he remembers with gratitude how soon you had accommodated your morals to the necessities of his service; how cheerfully you had abandoned the engagements of private friendship, and renounced the most solemn professions to the public. The sacrifice of Lord Chatham was not lost upon him. Even the cowardice and perfidy of deserting him may have done you no disservice in his esteem. The instance was painful, but the principle might please.

EDMUND BURKE

(1729 - 1797)

EDMUND BURKE was born in Dublin on 12th January, 1729. His father was a prosperous attorney and a Protestant; his mother was a Roman Catholic. Burke himself was always a sincere and convinced Protestant, but thanks to his mother he felt in sympathy with those who held the older faith, and, unlike most Irish Protestants, he could see the Catholic point of view. He was educated at a school at Ballitore, County Kildare, kept by an English Quaker named Shackleton, to whom in after life he confessed himself to be deeply indebted. In 1743 he entered Trinity College, Dublin, where he graduated B.A. in 1748. His college career appears to have been devoid alike of splendours and miseries; he read assiduously, but not along academic lines, and had no reputation as scholar or

dunce. In 1750 he went to the Middle Temple to study law, but he did not study methodically and was never called to the Bar. His health was not good, and he spent much time in wandering about the country in search of bodily vigour. His mental vigour was always exceptionally great, and he read widely and judiciously. The withdrawal of the allowance he received from his father forced him to adopt literature as a means of livelihood. In 1756 he published *A Vindication of Natural Society, in a Letter to Lord —, by a Late Noble Writer*. This was an able parody of Bolingbroke, but cannot be reckoned as an entire success, as it was thought by critics of intelligence to be entirely serious in its purport; indeed it was taken for a genuine work of Bolingbroke's.

In the same year he published *The Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas on the Sublime and the Beautiful*, a rather commonplace work on æsthetics, which, however, broke new ground, and perhaps helped to inspire Lessing to write his *Laocoon*. He planned and edited *The Annual Register*, the first number of which appeared in 1759, and, after ceasing to edit it, contributed regularly to it until 1788. For five years he was private secretary to "single-speech" Hamilton, and accompanied him to Ireland, but quarrelled with him in 1764. Hamilton was a contemptible creature, and expected Burke to devote all his time to his interests, and so destroy all hope of advancement. In 1765 Burke became private secretary to the Marquess of Rockingham, and entered Parliament as member for Wendover. In 1768 he bought an estate worth £22,000 at Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire; it is not known exactly how he raised any money to pay for this; two-thirds of the money was raised by mortgages, and part may have been made by some speculations. He was financially embarrassed for the rest of his life, all the more so because his generosity was so much greater than his means. In 1770 he published his *Thoughts on the Present Discontents*. He suffered much because public opinion identified him with Junius; the *Letters* were thought to be so ably written that they could not be the work of another hand. He was M.P. for Bristol for six years, from 1774 to 1780, but lost his seat there owing to his championship of Irish trade and Catholic emancipation. Burke was the leading advocate of a policy

of peace and conciliation with America, and in several magnificent speeches he criticized the ministerial measures with regard to the colonies. He never surpassed some of his speeches on American affairs, which are unique alike for breadth of view and eloquence of language. From 1781 to 1794 he was M.P. for Malton, Yorkshire. In 1782, when the Rockingham party returned to power, Burke was made Paymaster-General of the Forces. He was disappointed at not being a member of the Cabinet, but he was even then a difficult colleague, and the asperity of his character increased with the years. On the fall of the Duke of Portland's Coalition ministry, 1783, of which Burke had also been part, Pitt again succeeded to power, and it was during this administration that the impeachment of Hastings, in which Burke was the prime mover, took place. The lucidity, eloquence, and mastery of detail which Burke showed on this occasion were great, but sometimes he was too picturesque in his language and too rancorous against Hastings. The chief feature in the latter part of Burke's life was his resolute struggle against the ideas and doctrines of the French Revolution. His attitude on this question separated him from his old friend Fox, and the Whigs who followed Fox. His famous *Reflections on the French Revolution*, a pamphlet which appeared in 1790, had an unprecedented sale, and gave enormous impetus to the reaction which had commenced in England. From this time most of his writings are powerful if somewhat unbalanced pleadings on the same side. The French Revolution became, in fact,

his monomania, and evoked his most serious outbursts of exaggeration and theatricalism. We may mention *An Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs* and the *Letters on a Regicide Peace*. In 1794 he retired from Parliament and received a pension. The Duke of Bedford unwisely attacked the awarding of this pension, and Burke replied with crushing effect in his *Letter to a Noble Lord*. Burke died on 9th July, 1797, his end being hastened by grief for the loss of his only son, a commonplace young man whom he considered a genius.

Burke's career was somewhat paradoxical. He was a supremely great statesman who never held any really important office. He was an unequalled orator, who, nevertheless, was nicknamed "the Dinner Bell" because he emptied the House when he rose to speak. His character has been drawn with more or less elaboration by many worthy writers, but there is no better portrait of him than Goldsmith's sketch in *Retaliation* (1774):

Here lies our good Edmund, whose
genius was such,
We scarcely can praise it or blame it
too much;
Who, born for the universe, narrowed
his mind,
And to party gave up what was
meant for mankind;
Though fraught with all learning,
yet straining his throat
To persuade Tommy Townshend to
lend him a vote;
Who, too deep for his hearers, still
went on refining,
And thought of convincing, while
they thought of dining;
Though equal to all things, for all
things unfit;
Too nice for a statesman, too proud
for a wit,

For a patriot too cool, for a drudge
disobedient,
And too fond of the *right* to pursue
the *expedient*.
In short, 'twas his fate, unemployed,
or in place, sir,
To eat mutton cold, and cut blocks
with a razor.

There are many lovers of literature who can read every form of composition except a speech. The qualities of a good speech—exaggerated colouring, repetition, and the various tricks of rhetoric—are turned into so many vices when printed. A speech, moreover, is usually ephemeral in its appeal. For these and other reasons, many readers read orations with modified rapture. Burke is the exception. He was enough of a poet to enunciate universal principles when dealing with the particular. His works are a storehouse of political wisdom of the best kind. Men of every shade of political opinion can learn much from Burke, except those extremists on either side who are incapable of learning anything from anybody. His style, in spite of occasional lapses into bombast, may be regarded as on the whole the best English prose style of the eighteenth century, and Burke and Bacon may be considered the two Englishmen of greatest all-round ability who gave themselves up to a political career.

[Sir James Prior, *Memoir of the Life and Character of the Rt. Hon. E. Burke*; T. Macknight, *History of the Life and Times of Edmund Burke*; Lord Morley, *Edmund Burke* (English Men of Letters Series); *Edmund Burke, a historical Study*; J. McCunn, *The Political Philosophy of Burke*.]

From "Thoughts on the Present Discontents"

In order to throw an odium on political connexion, these politicians suppose it a necessary incident to it, that you are blindly to follow the opinions of your party, when in direct opposition to your own clear ideas; a degree of servitude that no worthy man could bear the thought of submitting to; and such as, I believe, no connexions (except some court factions) ever could be so senselessly tyrannical as to impose. Men thinking freely, will, in particular instances, think differently. But still as the greater part of the measures which arise in the course of public business are related to, or dependent on, some great *leading general principles in government*, a man must be peculiarly unfortunate in the choice of his political company if he does not agree with them at least nine times in ten. If he does not concur in these general principles upon which the party is founded, and which necessarily draw on a concurrence in their application, he ought from the beginning to have chosen some other, more conformable to his opinions. When the question is in its nature doubtful, or not very material, the modesty which becomes an individual, and (in spite of our court moralists) that partiality which becomes a well-chosen friendship, will frequently bring on an acquiescence in the general sentiment. Thus the disagreement will naturally be rare; it will be only enough to indulge freedom, without violating concord, or disturbing arrangement. And this is all that ever was required for a character of the greatest uniformity and steadiness in connexion. How men can proceed without any connexion at all, is to me utterly incomprehensible. Of what sort of materials must that man be made, how must he be tempered and put together, who can sit whole years in parliament, with five hundred and fifty of his fellow-citizens, amidst the storm of such tempestuous passions, in the sharp conflict of so many wits, and tempers, and characters, in the agitation of such mighty questions, in the discussion of such vast and ponderous interests, without seeing any one sort of men, whose character, conduct, or disposition, would lead him to associate himself with them, to aid and be aided, in any one system of public utility?

I remember an old scholastic aphorism, which says, "that the man who lives wholly detached from others, must be either an angel or a devil". When I see in any of these detached gentlemen of our times the angelic purity, power, and beneficence, I shall admit them to be angels. In the mean time we are born only to be men. We shall do enough if we form ourselves to be good ones. It is therefore our business carefully to cultivate in our minds, to rear to the most perfect vigour and maturity, every sort of generous and honest feeling that belongs to our nature. To bring the dispositions that are lovely in private life into the service and conduct of

the commonwealth; so to be patriots, as not to forget we are gentlemen. To cultivate friendships, and to incur enmities. To have both strong, but both selected: in the one, to be placable; in the other, immovable. To model our principles to our duties and our situation. To be fully persuaded, that all virtue which is impracticable is spurious; and rather to run the risk of falling into faults in a course which leads us to act with effect and energy, than to loiter out our days without blame and without use. Public life is a situation of power and energy; he trespasses against his duty who sleeps upon his watch, as well as he that goes over to the enemy.

There is, however, a time for all things. It is not every conjuncture which calls with equal force upon the activity of honest men; but critical exigencies now and then arise; and I am mistaken, if this be not one of them. Men will see the necessity of honest combination; but they may see it when it is too late. They may embody, when it will be ruinous to themselves, and of no advantage to the country; when, for want of such a timely union as may enable them to oppose in favour of the laws, with the laws on their side, they may at length find themselves under the necessity of conspiring instead of consulting. The law, for which they stand, may become a weapon in the hands of its bitterest enemies; and they will be cast, at length, into that miserable alternative, between slavery and civil confusion, which no good man can look upon without horror; an alternative in which it is impossible he should take either part, with a conscience perfectly at repose. To keep that situation of guilt and remorse at the utmost distance is, therefore, our first obligation. Early activity may prevent late and fruitless violence. As yet we work in the light. The scheme of the enemies of public tranquillity has disarranged, it has not destroyed us.

If the reader believes that there really exists such a faction as I have described; a faction ruling by the private inclinations of a court, against the general sense of the people; and that this faction, whilst it pursues a scheme for undermining all the foundations of our freedom, weakens (for the present at least) all the powers of executory government, rendering us abroad contemptible, and at home distracted; he will believe also, that nothing but a firm combination of public men against this body, and that, too, supported by the hearty concurrence of the people at large, can possibly get the better of it. The people will see the necessity of restoring public men to an attention to the public opinion, and of restoring the constitution to its original principles. Above all, they will endeavour to keep the House of Commons from assuming a character which does not belong to it. They will endeavour to keep that House, for its existence, for its powers, and its privileges, as independent of every other, and as dependent upon themselves, as possible. This servitude is to a House of Commons (like obedience to the Divine law) "perfect freedom". For if they once quit this natural, rational, and liberal obedience, having deserted the only proper foundation of their power, they must seek a sup-

port in an abject and unnatural dependence somewhere else. When, through the medium of this just connexion with their constituents, the genuine dignity of the House of Commons is restored, it will begin to think of casting from it, with scorn, as badges of servility, all the false ornaments of illegal power, with which it has been, for some time, disgraced. It will begin to think of its old office of CONTROL. It will not suffer that last of evils to predominate in the country; men without popular confidence, public opinion, natural connexion, or mutual trust, invested with all the powers of government.

When they have learned this lesson themselves, they will be willing and able to teach the court, that it is the true interest of the prince to have but one administration; and that one composed of those who recommend themselves to their sovereign through the opinion of their country, and not by their obsequiousness to a favourite. Such men will serve their sovereign with affection and fidelity; because his choice of them, upon such principles, is a compliment to their virtue. They will be able to serve him effectually; because they will add the weight of the country to the force of the executory power. They will be able to serve their king with dignity; because they will never abuse his name to the gratification of their private spleen or avarice. This, with allowances for human frailty, may probably be the general character of a ministry, which thinks itself accountable to the House of Commons, when the House of Commons thinks itself accountable to its constituents. If other ideas should prevail, things must remain in their present confusion; until they are hurried into all the rage of civil violence; or until they sink into the dead repose of despotism.

Speech at his Arrival at Bristol, 1774

GENTLEMEN,

I am come hither to solicit in person, that favour which my friends have hitherto endeavoured to procure for me, by the most obliging, and to me the most honourable, exertions.

I have so high an opinion of the great trust which you have to confer on this occasion; and, by long experience, so just a diffidence in my abilities to fill it in a manner adequate even to my own ideas, that I should never have ventured of myself to intrude into that awful situation. But since I am called upon by the desire of several respectable fellow-subjects, as I have done at other times, I give up my fears to their wishes. Whatever my other deficiencies may be, I do not know what it is to be wanting to my friends.

I am not fond of attempting to raise public expectation by great promises. At this time, there is much cause to consider, and very little to presume. We seem to be approaching to a great crisis in our affairs,

which calls for the whole wisdom of the wisest among us, without being able to assure ourselves, that any wisdom can preserve us from many and great inconveniences. You know I speak of our unhappy contest with America. I confess, it is a matter on which I look down as from a precipice. It is difficult in itself, and it is rendered more intricate by a great variety of plans of conduct. I do not mean to enter into them. I will not suspect a want of good intention in framing them. But however pure the intentions of their authors may have been, we all know that the event has been unfortunate. The means of recovering our affairs are not obvious. So many great questions of commerce, of finance, of constitution, and of policy, are involved in this American deliberation, that I dare engage for nothing, but that I shall give it, without any predilection to former opinions, or any sinister bias whatsoever, the most honest and impartial consideration of which I am capable. The public has a full right to it; and this great city, a main pillar in the commercial interest of Great Britain, must totter on its base by the slightest mistake with regard to our American measures.

Thus much, however, I think it not amiss to lay before you; That I am not, I hope, apt to take up or lay down my opinions lightly. I have held, and ever shall maintain, to the best of my power, unimpaired and undiminished, the just, wise, and necessary constitutional superiority of Great Britain. This is necessary for America as well as for us. I never mean to depart from it. Whatever may be lost by it, I avow it. The forfeiture even of your favour, if by such a declaration I could forfeit it, though the first object of my ambition, never will make me disguise my sentiments on this subject.

But,—I have ever had a clear opinion, and have ever held a constant correspondent conduct, that this superiority is consistent with all the liberties a sober and spirited American ought to desire. I never mean to put any colonist, or any human creature, in a situation not becoming a freeman. To reconcile British superiority with American liberty shall be my great object, as far as my little faculties extend. I am far from thinking that both, even yet, may not be preserved.

When I first devoted myself to the public service, I considered how I should render myself fit for it; and this I did by endeavouring to discover what it was that gave this country the rank it holds in the world. I found that our prosperity and dignity arose principally, if not solely, from two sources; our constitution, and commerce. Both these I have spared no study to understand, and no endeavour to support.

The distinguishing part of our constitution is its liberty. To preserve that liberty inviolate, seems the particular duty and proper trust of a member of the House of Commons. But the liberty, the only liberty I mean, is a liberty connected with order; that not only exists along with order and virtue, but which cannot exist at all without them. It inheres in good and steady government, as in its substance and vital principle.

The other source of our power is commerce, of which you are so large a part, and which cannot exist, no more than your liberty, without a connexion with many virtues. It has ever been a very particular and a very favourite object of my study, in its principles, and in its details. I think many here are acquainted with the truth of what I say. This I know, that I have ever had my house open, and my poor services ready, for traders and manufacturers of every denomination. My favourite ambition is to have those services acknowledged. I now appear before you to make trial, whether my earnest endeavours have been so wholly oppressed by the weakness of my abilities as to be rendered insignificant in the eyes of a great trading city; or whether you choose to give a weight to humble abilities, for the sake of the honest exertions with which they are accompanied. This is my trial to-day. My industry is not on trial. Of my industry I am sure, as far as my constitution of mind and body admitted.

When I was invited by many respectable merchants, free-holders, and freemen of this city, to offer them my services, I had just received the honour of an election to another place, at a very great distance from this. I immediately opened the matter to those of my worthy constituents who were with me, and they unanimously advised me not to decline it. They told me, that they had elected me with a view to the public service: and as great questions relative to our commerce and colonies were imminent, that in such matters I might derive authority and support from the representation of this great commercial city; they desired me therefore to set off without delay, very well persuaded that I never could forget my obligations to them, or to my friends, for the choice they had made of me. From that time to this instant I have not slept; and if I should have the honour of being freely chosen by you, I hope I shall be as far from slumbering or sleeping when your service requires me to be awake, as I have been in coming to offer myself a candidate for your favour.

ROBERT FERGUSSON

(1750 - 1774)

ROBERT FERGUSSON was born in Edinburgh on 5th September, 1750. His father, an Aberdeenshire man, was clerk to a haberdasher. He was educated at the Edinburgh High School, at Dundee Grammar School, and at St. Andrews University. He intended to enter the

ministry, but his father's death in 1767 made him look for some employment which would bring a more immediate pecuniary return. He visited a well-to-do uncle in Aberdeenshire, in the hope that his uncle might use his influence to procure him employment, but

a quarrel, concerning the details of which traditions differ, ensued, and the young man returned to Edinburgh. He was too sensitive to become a medical student, as he half thought of doing; eventually he became an extracting clerk in the office of the Commissary Clerk, and continued to work there, diligently if unenthusiastically, for most of the remainder of his short life. He alleviated the monotony of his task by writing verses, which made him famous in Edinburgh by the time he was twenty-one. He was looked upon as Allan Ramsay's successor. Many of his poems appeared in Ruddiman's *Weekly Magazine, or Edinburgh Amusement*. His reputation was the means of introducing him into the best society of the day; unfortunately the convivial habits then fashionable undermined his feeble constitution, though he was not what is usually meant by dissipated. He published his poems in 1773. His health by this time was seriously affected; he became a victim of religious mania, and would read nothing but the Bible. An accidental fall down a staircase completed what drink and brooding on the Bible had begun; he became quite insane, and had to be confined in old Darien House, the public asylum, where he died on 16th October, 1774, aged only

twenty-four. He was buried in the Canongate churchyard, where Burns erected a gravestone with a poetical epitaph in 1789. Moralists who have enlarged upon his story seem to have forgotten that anyone may fall downstairs.

Burns's admiration for Fergusson is well known. As well as erecting his tombstone, he wrote of him as his "elder brother in the Muses", and imitated his style, diction, thought, and metre several times. *The Cottar's Saturday Night* is modelled upon *The Farmer's Ingle*, *The Brigs of Ayr* upon *The Mutual Complaint of Plainstones and Causey*, and so on. Burns acknowledged his debt to Fergusson most generously, but every now and then it is "discovered" by some unsympathetic critic of Burns, and put forward as a new discovery. Fergusson had not a tithe of Burns's genius; he was, of course, immature, but his poems at their best do not display more than talent of a clever and vivid kind. He was an urban poet, and, though one or two of his rustic pieces are good, his best poems are those in which he depicts the romantic if unsavoury Edinburgh of his day. He has undoubtedly been overpraised, and his injudicious admirers have caused other critics to overlook his very considerable merits.

The Farmer's Ingle

Et multo in primis hilarans convivium Baccho,
Ante focum, si frigus erit.

(*Virg. Buc.*)

Whan gloamin grey out-owre the welkin keeks;
Whan Batie ca's his owsen to the byre;
Whan Thrasher John, sair dung, his barn-door steeks,
And lusty lasses at the dightin tire;

Whan bangs fu' leal the e'enings coming cauld,
 And gars snaw-tappit Winter freeze in vain;
 Gars dowie mortals look baith blithe and bauld,
 Nor fley'd wi' a' the poortith o' the plain;
 Begin, my Muse! and chant in hamely strain.

Frae the big stack, weel winnow't on the hill,
 Wi' divots theekit frae the weet and drift;
 Sods, peats, and heathery trufs the chimley fill,
 And gar their thickening smeeek salute the lift.
 The gudeman, new come hame, is blithe to find,
 Whan he out-owre the hallan flings his een,
 That ilka turn is handled to his mind;
 That a' his housie looks sae cosh and clean;
 For cleanly house loes he, tho' e'er sae mean.

Weel kens the gudewife, that the pleughs require
 A heartsome meltith, and refreshin synd
 O' nappy liquor, owre a bleezin fire:
 Sair wark and poortith downa weel be join'd.
 Wi' butter'd bannocks now the girdle reeks;
 I' the far nook the bowie briskly reams;
 The readied kail stands by the chimley cheeks,
 And haud the riggin het wi' welcome streams,
 Whilk than the daintiest kitchen nicer seems.

Frae this, lat gentler gabs a lesson lear:
 Wad they to labouring lend an eident hand,
 They'd rax fell strang upo' the simplest fare,
 Nor find their stamacks ever at a stand.
 Fu' hale and healthy wad they pass the day;
 At night, in calmest slumbers dose fu' sound;
 Nor doctor need their weary life to spae,
 Nor dregs their noddle and their sense confound,
 Till death slip sleely on, and gie the hindmost wound.

On sicken food has mony a doughty deed
 By Caledonia's ancestors been done;
 By this did mony a wight fu' weirlike bleed
 In brulzies frae the dawn to set o' sun.
 'Twas this that braced their gardies stiff and strang;
 That bent the deadly yew in ancient days;

Laid Denmark's daring sons on yird along;
Gar'd Scottish thistles bang the Roman bays;
For near our crest their heads they doughtna raise.

The couthy cracks begin whan supper's owre;
The cheering bicker gars them glibly gash
O' Simmer's showery blinks, and Winter sour,
Whase floods did erst their mailin's produce hash.
'Bout kirk and market eke their tales gae on;
How Jock woo'd Jenny here to be his bride;
And there, how Marion, for a bastard son,
Upo' the cutty-stool was forced to ride;
The waefu' scauld o' our Mess John to bide.

The fient a cheep's amang the bairnies now;
For a' their anger's wi' their hunger gane:
Ay maun the childer, wi' a fastin mou',
Grumble and greet, and mak an unco mane.
In rangles round, before the ingle's lowe,
Frae Gudame's mouth auld-warld tales they hear,
O' warlocks loupin round the wirrikow;
O' ghaists that win in glen and kirkyard drear,
Whilk touzles a' their tap, and gars them shake wi' fear!

For weel she trows that fiends and fairies be
Sent frae the deil to fleetch us to our ill;
That kye hae tint their milk wi' evil ee;
And corn been scowder'd on the glowin kill.
A mock na this, my friends! but rather mourn,
Ye in life's brawest spring wi' reason clear;
Wi' eild our idle fancies a' return,
And dim our dolefu' days wi' bairnly fear;
The mind's ay cradled whan the grave is near.

Yet thrift, industrious, bides her latest days,
Tho' age her sair-dow'd front wi' runcles wave;
Yet frae the russet lap the spindle plays;
Her e'enin stent reels she as weel's the lave.
On some feast-day, the wee things, buskit braw,
Shall heeze her heart up wi' a silent joy,
Fu' cadgie that her head was up, and saw
Her ain spun cleedin on a darlin oy;
Careless tho' death shou'd mak the feast her foy.

In its auld lerroch yet the deas remains,
 Whare the gudeman aft streeks him at his ease;
 A warm and canny lean for weary banes
 O' lab'ers doil'd upon the wintry leas.
 Round him will baurins and the collie come,
 To wag their tail, and cast a thankfu' ee
 To him wha kindly flings them mony a crum
 O' kebbuck whang'd, and dainty fadge to prie;
 This a' the boon they crave, and a' the fee.

Frae him the lads their mornin counsel tak;
 What stacks he wants to thrash; what rigs to till;
 How big a birn maun lie on Bassie's back,
 For meal and mu'ter to the thirlin mill.
 Neist, the gudewife her hirelin damsels bids
 Glowr thro' the byre, and see the hawkies bound;
 Tak tent, 'case Crummy tak her wonted tids,
 And ca' the laiglen's treasure on the ground,
 Whilk spills a kebbuck nice, or yellow pound.

Then a' the house for sleep begin to grien,
 Their joints to slack frae industry a-while;
 The leaden god fa's heavy on their een,
 And hafflins steeks them frae their daily toil;
 The cruizie too can only blink and bleer;
 The restit ingle's done the maist it dow;
 Tacksman and cotter eke to bed maun steer,
 Upo' the cod to clear their drumly pow,
 Till wauken'd by the dawnin's ruddy glow.

Peace to the husbandman and a' his tribe,
 Whase care fells a' our wants frae year to year
 Lang may his sock and cou'ter turn the glybe,
 And bauks o' corn bend down wi' laded ear!
 May Scotia's simmers ay look gay and green;
 Her yellow har'sts frae scowry blasts decreed!
 May a' her tenants sit fu' snug and bien,
 Frae the hard grip o' ails, and poortith freed;
 And a lang lasting train o' peacefu' hours succeed.

HENRY MACKENZIE

(1745 - 1831)

HENRY MACKENZIE was born in Edinburgh on 26th August, 1745. His father was a well-known physician. He was educated at Edinburgh High School and University, and became a solicitor, eventually being appointed attorney for the crown in Scotland. In 1804 he was appointed comptroller of taxes for Scotland, and held this appointment until his death, which took place on 14th January, 1831.

Mackenzie's literary work was mostly done in the first half of his long life. His first and most celebrated novel, *The Man of Feeling*, appeared in 1771. There are two interesting features about its literary history. It was refused by several booksellers, though it was such a success when it did appear; and its authorship was claimed by a clergyman of Bath, who took the trouble of transcribing the book and giving an air of verisimilitude to his MS. by making erasures and insertions. *The Man of Feeling* is too lachrymose for modern tastes; it has all the worst features of Sterne's pathos with none of his redeeming humour. It is clumsily constructed and has no plot. *The Man of the World* (1773) has too

involved a plot; *Julia de Roubigné*, acclaimed by some critics as Mackenzie's masterpiece, is more in the vein of Richardson, whose epistolary form it adopts, but it is an over-tragic tale. Mackenzie's four plays, three of which were unsuccessful and all of which are now forgotten, need not be mentioned more fully. More interest attaches to his two periodicals, *The Mirror* (1779-1780) and *The Lounger* (1785-1787), both modelled upon *The Spectator*. Mackenzie wrote 99 papers in all for these two periodicals, or slightly less than half the total number of papers. One of them (*The Lounger*, 9th December, 1786) is one of the earliest appreciations of Burns. But it is as the author of *The Man of Feeling* that Mackenzie is remembered. Its name became his nickname, though actually Mackenzie was a shrewd and hard-headed man of affairs, as different as might be from his namby-pamby hero, Harley. Mackenzie's undoubted literary ability and his long life combined to give him a commanding position among Edinburgh men of letters; he linked the Edinburgh of Hume and Robertson with the Edinburgh of Scott.

From "The Man of Feeling"

THE BEGGAR AND HIS DOG

"I was a labourer, Sir, and gained as much as to make me live: I never laid by indeed: for I was reckoned a piece of a wag, and your wags, I take it, are seldom rich, Mr. Harley."—"So," said Harley, "you seem to know me."—"Ay, there are few folks in the country that I don't know

something of: how should I tell fortunes else?"—"True, but to go on with your story: you were a labourer, you say, and a wag; your industry, I suppose, you left with your old trade; but your humour you preserve to be of use to you in your new."

"What signifies sadness, Sir? a man grows lean on't: but I was brought to my idleness by degrees; first I could not work, and it went against my stomach to work ever after. I was seized with a jail fever at the time of the assizes being in the county where I lived; for I was always curious to get acquainted with the felons, because they are commonly fellows of much mirth and little thought, qualities I had ever an esteem for. In the height of this fever, Mr. Harley, the house where I lay took fire, and burnt to the ground; I was carried out in that condition, and lay all the rest of my illness in a barn. I got the better of my disease, however, but I was so weak that I spit blood whenever I attempted to work. I had no relation living that I knew of, and I never kept a friend above a week, when I was able to joke; I seldom remained above six months in a parish, so that I might have died before I had found a settlement in any; thus I was forced to beg my bread, and a sorry trade I found it, Mr. Harley. I told all my misfortunes truly, but they were seldom believed; and the few who gave me a half-penny as they passed, did it with a shake of the head, and an injunction not to trouble them with a long story. In short, I found that people do not care to give alms without some security for their money; a wooden leg or a withered arm is a sort of draught upon heaven for those who choose to have their money placed to account there; so I changed my plan, and, instead of telling my own misfortunes, began to prophesy happiness to others. This I found by much the better way: folks will always listen when the tale is their own; and of many who say they do not believe in fortune-telling, I have known few on whom it had not a very sensible effect. I pick up the names of their acquaintance; amours and little squabbles are easily gleaned among servants and neighbours; and indeed people themselves are the best intelligencers in the world for our purpose; they dare not puzzle us for their own sakes, for every one is anxious to hear what they wish to believe; and they who repeat it, to laugh at it when they have done, are generally more serious than their hearers are apt to imagine. With a tolerable good memory, and some share of cunning, with the help of walking a-nights over heaths and church-yards, with this, and showing the tricks of that there dog, whom I stole from the serjeant of a marching regiment (and by the way he can steal too upon occasion), I make shift to pick up a livelihood. My trade, indeed, is none of the honestest; yet people are not much cheated neither, who give a few half-pence for a prospect of happiness which I have heard some person say is all a man can arrive at in this world.—But I must bid you good day, Sir; for I have three miles to walk before noon, to inform some boarding-school young ladies whether their

husbands are to be peers of the realm, or captains in the army; a question which I promised to answer them by that time."

Harley had drawn a shilling from his pocket; but Virtue bade him consider on whom he was going to bestow it.—Virtue held back his arm;—but a milder form, a younger sister of Virtue's, not so severe as Virtue nor so serious as Pity, smiled upon him; his fingers lost their compression; nor did Virtue offer to catch the money as it fell. It had no sooner reached the ground, than the watchful cur—(a trick he had been taught) snapped it up; and contrary to the most approved method of stewardship, delivered it immediately into the hands of his master.

(From *Chapter XIV.*)

CLARA REEVE

(1729 – 1807)

CLARA REEVE was born at Ipswich in 1729. She was the daughter of the rector of Freston and Kerton, who was also perpetual curate of St. Nicholas, Ipswich. She was educated by her father. There is nothing to record in her long and uneventful life, except the publication of her novels and her friendship with Richardson's daughter. She died at Ipswich on 3rd December, 1807.

Miss Reeve's writings include a translation of Barclay's *Argenis* (1772), *The Old English Baron* (1777), *The Progress of Romance* (1785), *The Exiles* (1788), and *The Memoirs of Sir Roger de Clarendon* (1793). *The Old English Baron*, originally known as *The Champion of Virtue, a Gothic Story*, alone is still remembered. It is an attempt at blending the ancient romance and the modern novel; it is avowedly an imitation of Walpole's *Castle of Otranto*, but it does not reproduce the life of the

century it sets out to represent, and its dialogue might, with slight changes, have been spoken by characters of the time of Charles II. Miss Reeve attempted to rationalize her very mild supernatural effects; the author of *The Castle of Otranto* said of *The Old English Baron* that "it is so probable that any trial for murder at the Old Bailey would make a more interesting story". She had not a vivid imagination, nor had she, like Fielding and Smollett, seen life from many angles; she had not even, like Horace Walpole, gone on the "grand tour". She was, accordingly, not qualified to write a masterpiece of the kind which she attempted. Her tale, however, is of some importance, partly because it was extremely popular, and partly because it links Horace Walpole and Anne Radcliffe, and marks a stage, albeit an unimportant one, in the development of the "Tale of Terror".

scarcely learnt to form her letters when she began to compose stories, farces, and epics. On her fifteenth birthday, encouraged by her step-mother, she made a holocaust of her writings; but certain imaginary characters survived this ceremony, and began to develop in her mind. From them grew her first novel, *Evelina*, which was published in 1778, when she was twenty-five, but which had been written much earlier still. She had difficulty in finding a publisher, but when the book appeared it enjoyed a success unparalleled since the days of Richardson. It was anonymous, but it was soon known that Miss Burney was the author. She became at once a celebrity, lived much with Mrs. Thrale, Dr. Johnson's friend, and was caressed by the "Great Cham" himself. She tried her hand at writing a comedy, but suppressed it owing to adverse domestic criticism. Her second novel, *Cecilia*, appeared in 1782. It was written with more elaboration than its predecessor, and there is little doubt that Johnson supervised the whole, and occasionally added a moralizing paragraph. Its success was as great, if not as spectacular, as that of *Evelina*. After the death of Johnson and Mrs. Thrale's second marriage, Miss Burney, who had been introduced to the royal family by Mrs. Delany, the widow of Swift's friend, was appointed (1786) second keeper of the robes to Queen Charlotte. She found this a most arduous and intolerable job. Her hours were 7 a.m. to 11 p.m., with no holidays; her duties, which principally consisted of pinning and unpinning the queen, could have been adequately performed by a second-

class or even a third-class brain; and her immediate superior was a German with vile manners and a malignant disposition. Not unnaturally, Miss Burney's health began to suffer; she was almost prevented from resigning; but, at last, after five years' servitude, she was allowed to retire with a small pension in 1791. Two years later she married a French refugee, General D'Arblay; the marriage was a happy one, though the courtship began "with a little aversion". They had little to live upon save Madame D'Arblay's pension. She endeavoured to make money by means of a tragedy, *Edwy and Elvina*, but it was a failure, in spite of the acting of Kemble and Mrs. Siddons. Her third novel, *Camilla* (1796), was a pecuniary though not a literary success, and enabled her to build a cottage near Mickleham. From 1802 to 1812 Madame D'Arblay lived in France; she returned to England in order that her son might not be a conscript. Her last novel, *The Wanderer*, appeared in 1814, and seems to have found many purchasers but few readers. General D'Arblay died in 1818; his widow spent the rest of her life, which was quite uneventful, in England. She published memoirs of her father in 1832; five volumes of her *Letters and Diaries* were published two years after her death, which took place on 6th January, 1840.

Miss Burney is a curious example of a writer whose powers not only failed to develop but gradually waned, and whose style steadily deteriorated as it became more self-conscious. *Evelina, or a Young Lady's Entrance into the World*

is a crude, but very spontaneous and entertaining novel; it is farce rather than high comedy; its portraits are caricatures rather than likenesses; but the farce is excellent and the caricatures admirable. *Cecilia, or Memoirs of an Heiress* is a first-rate novel, though it is heavier and more didactic in its tone, and its style is in places redolent of *Rasselas*. *Camilla, or a Picture of Youth* is only good in parts, and is marred by fine writing and Johnsonese; *The Wanderer, or Female Difficulties* is quite unreadable. Her magniloquent *Memoirs of Dr. Burney*, which roused Macaulay's disgust, can now, owing to the lapse of time, be read, in small doses, with positive pleasure, though perhaps not with the kind of pleasure which the author intended. Her *Diary* is most enter-

taining; not only does it preserve much information about Dr. Johnson and the royal family, but it depicts, at times, an interesting conflict between humour and prejudice in the author's mind. Miss Burney inaugurated the novel of home life; she had narrative powers of the highest kind, and a great gift for caricature. Miss Edgeworth, who was fifteen years her junior, and Miss Austen, who was her junior by twenty-three years, may be regarded as her followers in fiction.

[Austin Dobson, *Fanny Burney* (English Men of Letters Series); C. Hill, *Fanny Burney at the Court of Queen Charlotte*; L. B. Seeley, *Fanny Burney and her Friends*; Edith J. Morley, *Fanny Burney*; M. Masfield, *The Story of Fanny Burney*; R. B. Johnson, *Fanny Burney and the Burneys*.]

Evelina

FROM LETTER XXXIII

I was both uneasy and impatient to know the fate of Madame Duval, and immediately got out of the chariot to seek her. I desired the footman to show me which way she was gone; he pointed with his finger, by way of answer, and I saw that he dared not trust his voice to make any other. I walked on, a very quick pace, and soon, to my great consternation, perceived the poor lady, seated upright in a ditch. I flew to her, with unfeigned concern at her situation. She was sobbing, nay, almost roaring, and in the utmost agony of rage and terror. As soon as she saw me, she redoubled her cries, but her voice was so broken, I could not understand a word she said. I was so much shocked that it was with difficulty I forebore exclaiming against the cruelty of the Captain, for thus wantonly ill-treating her; and I could not forgive myself for having passively suffered the deception. I used my utmost endeavours to comfort her, assuring her of our present safety, and begging her to rise, and return to the chariot.

Almost bursting with passion, she pointed to her feet, and with frightful violence, she actually beat the ground with her hands.

I then saw, that her feet were tied together with a strong rope, which was fastened to the upper branch of a tree, even with an hedge which ran

along the ditch where she sat. I endeavoured to untie the knot, but soon found it was infinitely beyond my strength.

I was, therefore, obliged to apply to the footman; but being very unwilling to add to his mirth, by the sight of Madame Duval's situation, I desired him to lend me a knife; I returned with it, and cut the rope. Her feet were soon disentangled, and then, though with great difficulty, I assisted her to rise. But what was my astonishment, when, the moment she was up, she hit me a violent slap on the face! I retreated from her with precipitation and dread, and she then loaded me with reproaches, which, though almost unintelligible, convinced me that she imagined I had voluntarily deserted her; but she seemed not to have the slightest suspicion that she had not been attacked by real robbers.

I was so much surprised and confounded at the blow, that, for some time, I suffered her to rave without making any answer; but her extreme agitation, and real suffering, soon dispelled my anger, which all turned into compassion. I then told her, that I had been forcibly detained from following her, and assured her of my real sorrow at her ill usage.

She began to be somewhat appeased; and I again entreated her to return to the carriage, or give me leave to order that it should draw up to the place where we stood. She made no answer, till I told her, that the longer we remained still, the greater would be the danger of our ride home. Struck with this hint, she suddenly, and with hasty steps, moved forward.

Her dress was in such disorder, that I was quite sorry to have her figure exposed to the servants, who all of them, in imitation of their master, held her in derision: however, the disgrace was unavoidable.

The ditch, happily, was almost quite dry, or she must have suffered still more seriously; yet, so forlorn, so miserable a figure, I never before saw. Her head-dress had fallen off; her linen was torn; her negligee had not a pin left in it; her petticoats she was obliged to hold on; and her shoes were perpetually slipping off. She was covered with dirt, weeds, and filth, and her face was really horrible, for the pomatum and powder from her head, and the dust from the road, were quite *pasted* on her skin by her tears, which, with her *rouge*, made so frightful a mixture, that she hardly looked human.

The servants were ready to die with laughter, the moment they saw her; but not all my remonstrances could prevail upon her to get into the carriage, till she had most vehemently reproached them both, for not rescuing her. The footman, fixing his eyes on the ground, as if fearful of again trusting himself to look at her, protested that the robbers had vowed they would shoot him, if he moved an inch, and that one of them had stayed to watch the chariot, while the other carried her off; adding, that the reason of their behaving so barbarously, was to revenge our having secured our purses. Notwithstanding her anger, she gave immediate credit

to what he said, and really imagined that her want of money had irritated the pretended robbers to treat her with such cruelty. I determined, therefore, to be carefully upon my guard, not to betray the imposition, which could now answer no other purpose, than occasioning an irreparable breach between her and the Captain.

Just as we were seated in the chariot, she discovered the loss which her head had sustained, and called out, "My God! what is becomed of my hair?—why the villain has stole all my curls!"

She then ordered the man to run and see if he could find any of them in the ditch. He went, and presently returning, produced a great quantity of hair, in such a nasty condition, that I was amazed she would take it; and the man, as he delivered it to her, found it impossible to keep his countenance; which she no sooner observed, than all her stormy passions were again raised. She flung the battered curls in his face, saying, "Sirrah, what do you grin for? I wish you'd been served so yourself, and you wouldn't have found it no such joke; you are the impudentest fellow ever I see, and if I find you dare grin at me any more, I shall make no ceremony of boxing your ears."

Satisfied with the threat, the man hastily retired, and we drove on.

Her anger now subsiding into grief, she began most sorrowfully to lament her case. "I believe," she cried, "never nobody was so unlucky as I am! and so here, because I ha'n't had misfortunes enough already, that puppy has made me lose my curls!—Why, I can't see nobody without them:—only look at me,—I was never so bad off in my life before. *Pardi*, if I'd know'd as much, I'd have brought two or three sets with me: but I'd never a thought of such a thing as this."

RICHARD BRINSLEY BUTLER SHERIDAN

(1751 – 1816)

RICHARD BRINSLEY BUTLER SHERIDAN was born at 12 Dorset Street, Dublin, on 30th October, 1751. His father, a son of Swift's friend, was well known as an actor, as the author of *A Dissertation on Difficulties in Learning the English Tongue*, and as the holder of highly original views upon education. His mother had written several novels

and plays; one of the latter, *The Discovery*, was a stock piece at Drury Lane for many years. Sheridan was educated at Harrow School, where he remained from 1762 to 1768. He continued his education under a tutor, and was instructed in elocution by his father. In 1771 he collaborated with a school friend, N. B. Halhed, to translate the

Epistles of Aristænetus, and to compose a farce originally entitled *Ixion*, but rechristened *Jupiter* after being recast by Sheridan. In March, 1772, he eloped to Calais with Miss Elizabeth Ann Linley, a beautiful girl of sixteen who had already made a name for herself as *prima donna* of her father's concerts. This was done to save Miss Linley from the persecutions of a married admirer, one Major Mathews, with whom Sheridan fought two duels, in the second of which he was seriously wounded. Sheridan and Miss Linley were secretly married in France, and were married again in England in April, 1773. This romantic episode not only provided Sheridan with a wife with whom he was ideally happy, but brought his name before the public, and was of undoubted value to him as an advertisement when he began to write plays.

Sheridan's first comedy, *The Rivals*, was produced at Covent Garden Theatre on 17th January, 1775. It was not a success at first, owing partly to the fact that Sir Lucius O'Trigger was played by John Lee, who belonged to a somewhat old-fashioned school of acting. It is probable also that the Faulkland and Julia interest was too prominent, and the play was revised, and first performed in its revised version on 28th January, 1775, with Lawrence Clinch in the part of Sir Lucius. It became immensely popular, and at once took its place as a classic. It has been said that its characters are stock characters or caricatures or both; but its dialogue is brilliant and its plot is skilfully worked out. Mrs. Malaprop, in particular, though a distant relation of Dog-

berry, is a highly original creation, and has added one word and many phrases to the English language.

Sheridan's next play, a mere dramatic trifle entitled *St. Patrick's Day, or the Scheming Lieutenant*, was produced at Covent Garden on 2nd May, 1775. It was written for the benefit performance of Lawrence Clinch, who had been largely the means of saving *The Rivals*. It was intended to make money, and succeeded in this object. Sheridan then turned his attention to comic opera, and produced *The Duenna* at Covent Garden on 21st November, 1775. The music was supplied by his father-in-law, Thomas Linley, and was in all probability mainly responsible for the success of the piece, which had a record run of seventy-five nights. There is not much wit in the opera, and it is fairly obvious that some of the lyrics are Sheridan's juvenile poems, not specially written for this piece.

In 1776 Sheridan bought Garrick's share in Drury Lane Theatre. He raised the money on mortgage, and only paid £1300 in cash. On 24th February, 1777, he produced *A Trip to Scarborough*, which is a *réchauffé* of Vanbrugh's *Relapse*. This play is usually printed among Sheridan's plays, but it has no more right there than *The Tempest* has in the works of Dryden and D'Avenant, though Sheridan's task was one of purification, not adulteration. Besides making Vanbrugh's play more respectable, however, Sheridan made several workmanlike improvements in it, and in particular bettered the first act by means of shortening it.

Sheridan's masterpiece, *The School for Scandal*, was produced

at Drury Lane on 8th May, 1777. Although it has no appearance of being laboured, it cost its author much hard thought, and in despair he welded together two separate conceptions, *The Teazles* and *The Slanderers, a Pump Room Scene*. The construction of the play is not perfect, but the dialogue is so brilliant and the great scenes—especially the screen-scene—are so effective on the stage that they silence all adverse criticism. The play was almost suppressed by the Lord Chamberlain's office, but when it was produced it was acted by a company so brilliant that Genest, writing fifty years later, said: "No new performer has ever appeared in any one of the principal characters that was not inferior to the person who acted it originally."

The last of Sheridan's great plays is *The Critic, or a Tragedy Rehearsed*, which was produced at Drury Lane on 30th October, 1779. It is a brilliant farce. It owes something to Fielding's *Tom Thumb the Great* (1730), and more to *The Rehearsal* (1672) of the Duke of Buckingham and others; but the very fact that it has caused these burlesques to be almost forgotten is in itself a sufficient vindication of Sheridan's essential originality. As a critic said, to those familiar with *The Critic*, "Buckingham's farce now seemed rather like a blurred imitation of Sheridan than a representation of the original from which that great wit had drawn his idea." There is a well-known story about how *The Critic* was completed. Two days before the first performance the third act was not written, so Linley and the actor King inveigled Sheridan into the

small green-room on some pretext. There they incarcerated him, having provided him with pens and paper, two bottles of claret, and a plate of anchovy sandwiches, informing him that he would not be liberated until he had finished the play. Under such conditions were written some of the most brilliant scenes in English burlesque, including the famous "discovery-scene" (the *ἀναγνώρισις* of Aristotle's *Poetics*!), the episode of Lord Burleigh's nod, and the entry of Tilburina and her confidante, mad, according to custom, the one in white satin and the other in white linen. Sir Fretful Plagiary was at once recognized as a caricature of the dramatist Richard Cumberland (q.v.); nor are there many better instances of a reputation ruined by ridicule than that of the author of *The West Indian*, who is now mainly remembered as having been Sheridan's model for this irritable dramatist.

After an interval of almost twenty years Sheridan wrote *Pizarro*, which is described by its author as a tragedy, but which might properly be called a patriotic melodrama. Sheridan would seem on internal evidence to have collaborated with Mr. Puff in the composition of this play, which is based upon Kotzebue's *Spaniards in Peru*. He embedded in it some excerpts from his parliamentary orations. *Pizarro* adds nothing to Sheridan's reputation, but it added £15,000 to the treasury of Drury Lane in its first season.

Sheridan's career as a dramatist began when he was twenty-three, and for all practical purposes may be said to have ended when he was twenty-eight. He lived to the age

of sixty-four, and gained a great reputation as a politician, a wit, and an orator, and a certain amount of notoriety as a spendthrift and as the familiar friend of the Prince of Wales. The events of his life after the end of his literary career may be briefly recapitulated. He was returned to Parliament for Stafford as a supporter of Fox in 1780; he was Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs in the Rockingham ministry in 1782, and Secretary to the Treasury in the Coalition ministry, 1783. He spoke for six hours on the charges brought against Warren Hastings with regard to the Begums of Oude (7th February, 1787). He opposed the Irish Union in 1799, was Treasurer of the Navy in the "Ministry of all the Talents" in 1806 and 1807, and became a Privy Councillor. The close of his life was embittered by ill-health and debts. He lost his seat in Parliament and therewith his immunity from arrest for debt in 1812. He died on 7th July, 1816, in poverty, but not in the utter destitution described by some anecdotists.

Sheridan enjoyed an exaggerated reputation during his lifetime and for some time after his death. Byron said of him: "Whatever Sheridan has done or chosen to do has been, *par excellence*, always the *best* of its kind. He has written the *best* comedy (*School for Scandal*), the *best* opera (*The Duenna*—in my mind far before that St. Giles's lampoon, *The Beggar's Opera*), the *best* farce (*The Critic*—it is only too good for an afterpiece), and the *best* address (*Monologue on Garrick*)—and to crown all, delivered the very *best* oration (the

famous Begum speech) ever conceived or heard in this country." It was not uncommon to bracket together the names of Shakespeare and Sheridan (doubtless the alliteration encouraged this) as the two chief ornaments of the British stage. Then a reaction set in, and Sheridan was denounced as being himself a Fretful Plagiary, borrowing *this* from Molière, *that* from Fielding, and *the other thing* from the Restoration dramatists. The truth is that Sheridan was not a great creative genius, but he had admirable dramatic talent, he was a master of stagecraft, and above all he had a sparkling wit, and could write brilliant dialogue. Taking some of the stock characters and stock situations of comedy (some of them at least as old as Plautus), he suffused them all with his coruscating yet urbane wit, and may be said to have made them his own for ever. Perhaps the most serious charge which can be brought against Sheridan is that brought by Macaulay, who said that his dialogue was too brilliant, and that his very butts and dupes outshone the whole Hôtel de Rambouillet. To this Sheridan would probably have replied in the words of Mr. Puff: "Heaven forbid they should not in a free country! Sir, I am not for making slavish distinctions, and giving all the fine language to the upper sort of people."

[W. Fraser Rae, *Sheridan: a Biography*; Walter Sichel, *Sheridan, from new and original material*; Mrs. Oliphant, *Sheridan* (English Men of Letters Series); L. C. Sanders, *A Life of Richard Brinsley Sheridan*; I. O. Williams's edition of the plays.]

From "The School for Scandal"

(Act IV)

(SCENE I.—*Picture Room at CHARLES'S*)

(Enter CHARLES SURFACE, SIR OLIVER SURFACE, MOSES, and CARELESS.)

Charles Surface.—Walk in, gentlemen, pray walk in;—here they are, the family of the Surfaces, up to the Conquest.

Sir Oliver Surface.—And, in my opinion, a goodly collection.

Charles Surface.—Aye, aye, these are done in the true spirit of portrait painting; no *volontière grace* or expression. Not like the works of your modern Raphaels, who give you the strongest resemblance, yet contrive to make your portrait independent of you; so that you may sink the original and not hurt the picture. No, no; the merit of these is the inveterate likeness—all stiff and awkward as the originals, and like nothing in human nature besides.

Sir Oliver Surface.—Ah! we shall never see such figures of men again.

Charles Surface.—I hope not.—Well, you see, Master Premium, what a domestic character I am; here I sit of an evening surrounded by my family;—But come, get to your pulpit, Mr. Auctioneer; here's an old gouty chair of my grandfather's will answer the purpose.

Careless.—Aye, aye, this will do.—But, Charles, I haven't a hammer; and what's an auctioneer without his hammer?

Charles Surface.—Egad, that's true;—what parchment have we here?—Oh, our genealogy in full. Here, Careless—you shall have no common bit of mahogany, here's the family tree for you, you rogue,—this shall be your hammer, and now you may knock down my ancestors with their own pedigrees.

Sir Oliver Surface.—What an unnatural rogue!—an *ex post facto* parricide! (*Aside*).

Careless.—Yes, yes, here's a list of your generation indeed;—faith, Charles, this is the most convenient thing you could have found for the business, for 'twill serve not only as a hammer, but a catalogue into the bargain—Come, begin—A-going, a-going, a-going!

Charles Surface.—Bravo, Careless!—Well, here's my great uncle, Sir Richard Raveline, a marvellous good general in his day, I assure you. He served in all the Duke of Marlborough's wars, and got that cut over the eye at the battle of Malplaquet.—What say you, Mr. Premium?—look at him—there's a hero, not cut out of his feathers, as your modern clipt captains are, but enveloped in wig and regimentals, as a general should be—What do you bid?

Moses.—Mr. Premium would have *you* speak.

Charles Surface.—Why, then, he shall have him for ten pounds, and I'm sure that's not dear for a staff-officer.

Sir Oliver Surface.—Heaven, deliver me! his famous uncle Richard for ten pounds! (*Aside*)—Well, sir, I take him at that.

Charles Surface.—Careless, knock down my uncle Richard.—Here, now, is a maiden sister of his, my great aunt Deborah, done by Kneller, thought to be in his best manner, and a very formidable likeness. There she is, you see, a shepherdess feeding her flock.—You shall have her for five pounds ten—the sheep are worth the money.

Sir Oliver Surface.—Ah! poor Deborah! a woman who set such a value on herself! (*Aside*)—Five pounds ten—she's mine.

Charles Surface.—Knock down my aunt Deborah!—Here, now, are two that were a sort of cousins of theirs. You see, Moses, these pictures were done some time ago, when beaux wore wigs, and the ladies their own hair.

Sir Oliver Surface.—Yes, truly, head-dresses appear to have been a little lower in those days.

Charles Surface.—Well, take that couple for the same.

Moses.—'Tis a good bargain.

Charles Surface.—Careless!—This, now, is a grandfather of my mother's, a learned judge, well known on the western circuit.—What do you rate him at, Moses?

Moses.—Four guineas.

Charles Surface.—Four guineas!—Gad's life, you don't bid me the price of his wig.—Mr. Premium, you have more respect for the woolsack; do let us knock his lordship down at fifteen.

Sir Oliver Surface.—By all means.

Careless.—Gone!

Charles Surface.—And there are two brothers of his, William and Walter Blunt, Esquires, both members of Parliament, and noted speakers, and what's very extraordinary, I believe this is the first time they were ever bought or sold.

Sir Oliver Surface.—That is very extraordinary, indeed! I'll take them at your own price, for the honour of Parliament.

Careless.—Well said, little Premium! I'll knock them down at forty.

Charles Surface.—Here's a jolly fellow—I don't know what relation, but he was mayor of Manchester: take him at eight pounds.

Sir Oliver Surface.—No, no; six will do for the mayor.

Charles Surface.—Come, make it guineas, and I'll throw you the two aldermen there into the bargain.

Sir Oliver Surface.—They're mine.

Charles Surface.—Careless, knock down the mayor and aldermen.—But plague on't, we shall be all day retailing in this manner; do let us deal wholesale: what say you, little Premium? Give us three hundred pounds for the rest of the family in the lump.

Careless.—Aye, aye, that will be the best way.

Sir Oliver Surface.—Well, well, anything to accommodate you; they are mine. But there is one portrait which you have always passed over.

Careless.—What, that ill-looking little fellow over the settee?

Sir Oliver Surface.—Yes, sir, I mean that, though I don't think him so ill-looking a little fellow, by any means.

Charles Surface.—What, that?—Oh! that's my uncle Oliver; 'twas done before he went to India.

Careless.—Your uncle Oliver!—Gad, then you'll never be friends, Charles. That, now, to me, is as stern a looking rogue as ever I saw; an unforgiving eye, and a damned disinheriting countenance! an inveterate knave, depend on't. Don't you think so, little Premium?

Sir Oliver Surface.—Upon my soul, sir, I do not; I think it is as honest a looking face as any in the room, dead or alive;—but I suppose uncle Oliver goes with the rest of the lumber?

Charles Surface.—No, hang it; I'll not part with poor Noll. The old fellow has been very good to me, and, egad, I'll keep his picture while I've a room to put it in.

Sir Oliver Surface.—The rogue's my nephew after all! (*Aside*)—But, sir, I have somehow taken a fancy to that picture.

Charles Surface.—I'm sorry for't, you certainly will not have it. Oons, haven't you got enough of them?

Sir Oliver Surface.—I forgive him everything! (*Aside*)—But, sir, when I take a whim in my head I don't value money. I'll give you as much for that as for all the rest.

Charles Surface.—Don't tease me, master broker; I tell you, I'll not part with it, and there's an end of it.

Sir Oliver Surface.—How like his father the dog is! (*Aside*)—Well, well, I have done. I did not perceive it before, but I think I never saw such a striking resemblance—(*Aside*)—Here is a draught for your sum.

Charles Surface.—Why, 'tis for eight hundred pounds.

Sir Oliver Surface.—You will not let Sir Oliver go?

Charles Surface.—Zounds! no!—I tell you once more.

Sir Oliver Surface.—Then never mind the difference, we'll balance that another time—but give me your hand on the bargain; you are an honest fellow, Charles—I beg pardon, sir, for being so free.—Come, Moses.

Charles Surface.—Egad, this is a whimsical old fellow! But hark'ee, Premium, you'll prepare lodgings for these gentlemen.

Sir Oliver Surface.—Yes, yes, I'll send for them in a day or two.

Charles Surface.—But, hold; do now send a genteel conveyance for them, sir, for I assure you, they were most of them used to ride in their own carriages.

Sir Oliver Surface.—I will, I will—for all but Oliver.

Charles Surface.—Aye, all but the little nabob.

Sir Oliver Surface.—You're fixed on that?

Charles Surface.—Peremptorily.

Sir Oliver Surface.—A dear extravagant rogue! (*Aside*)—Good-day!—Come, Moses.—Let me hear now who calls him profligate!

[*Exeunt SIR OLIVER SURFACE and MOSES.*]

The Critic

(*From Act II, Scene II*)

(PUFF is author of a tragedy, *The Spanish Armada*, which is being rehearsed before him and his friends DANGLE and SNEER. WHISKER-ANDOS and TILBURINA are hero and heroine in the tragedy.)

Whisk.—O matchless excellence!—and must we part?

Well, if—we must—we must—and in that case
The less said the better.

Puff.—Hey day! here's a cut! What, are all the mutual protestations out?

Tilburina.—Now pray, sir, don't interrupt us just here, you ruin our feelings.

Puff.—Your feelings!—but zounds, my feelings, ma'am!

Sneer.—No; pray don't interrupt them.

Whisk.—One last embrace—

Tilb.—Now—farewell, for ever.

Whisk.—For ever!

Tilb.—Aye, for ever.

[*Going.*]

Puff.—'Sdeath and fury! Gad's life! sir! madam, if you go out without the parting look, you might as well dance out. Here, here!

Confidant.—But pray, sir, how am I to get off here?

Puff.—*You*, pshaw! what the devil signifies how *you* get off! edge away at the top, or where you will. (*Pushes the CONFIDANT off.*) Now ma'am, you see—

Tilburina.—We understand you, sir.

—Aye, for ever.

Both.—Oh!

[*Turning back and exeunt. Scene closes.*]

Dangle.—Oh, charming!

Puff.—Hey!—'tis pretty well, I believe; you see I don't attempt to strike out anything new, but I take it I improve on the established modes.

Sneer.—You do, indeed. But pray, is not Queen Elizabeth to appear?

Puff.—No, not once—but she is to be talked of for ever; so that, egad, you'll think a hundred times that she is on the point of coming in.

Sneer.—Hang it, I think it's a pity to keep her in the green room all the night.

Puff.—Oh, no, that always has a fine effect—it keeps up expectation.

Dangle.—But are we not to have a battle?

Puff.—Yes, yes, you will have a battle at last, but, egad, it's not to be by land, but by sea—and that is the only quite new thing in the piece.

Dangle.—What, Drake at the Armada, hey?

Puff.—Yes, i'faith—fireships and all: then we shall end with the procession. Hey! that will do, I think?

Sneer.—No doubt on't.

Puff.—Come, we must not lose time—so now for the *underplot*.

Sneer.—What the plague, have you another plot?

Puff.—O Lord, yes—ever while you live have two plots to your tragedy. The grand point in managing them is only to let your underplot have as little connexion with your main plot as possible. I flatter myself nothing can be more distinct than mine, for as in my chief plot the characters are all great people, I have laid my underplot in low life; and as the former is to end in deep distress, I make the other end as happy as a farce.—Now, Mr. Hopkins, as soon as you please.

(*Enter UNDER PROMPTER*)

Under Prompter.—Sir, the carpenter says it is impossible you can go to the park scene yet.

Puff.—The park scene! No—I mean the description scene here, in the wood.

Under Prompter.—Sir, the performers have cut it out.

Puff.—Cut it out!

Under Prompter.—Yes, sir.

Puff.—What! the whole scene of Queen Elizabeth?

Under Prompter.—Yes, sir.

Puff.—And the description of her horse and side-saddle?

Under Prompter.—Yes, sir.

Puff.—So, so, this is very fine indeed! Mr. Hopkins, how the plague could you suffer this?

Hopkins.—(*From within*) Sir, indeed the pruning-knife—

Puff.—The pruning-knife—zounds, the axe! why, here has been such lopping and topping, I shan't have the bare trunk of my play left presently. Very well, sir—the performers must do as they please, but upon my soul, I'll print it, every word.

Sneer.—That I would, indeed.

Puff.—Very well, sir,—then we must go on. Zounds! I would not have parted with the description of the horse! Well, sir, go on—Sir, it

was one of the finest and most laboured things.—Very well, sir, let them go on—There you had him and his accoutrements from the bit to the crupper.—Very well, sir, we must go to the park scene.

Under Prompter.—Sir, there is the point, the carpenters say that unless there is some business put in here before the drop, they shan't have time to clear away the fort, or sink Gravesend and the river.

Puff.—So! this is a pretty dilemma, truly! Gentlemen, you must excuse me, these fellows will never be ready unless I go and look after them myself.

Sneer.—Oh, dear, sir, these little things will happen.

Puff.—To cut out this scene!—but I'll print it—egad, I'll print it, every word!

[*Exeunt.*]

PHILIP DORMER STANHOPE, FOURTH EARL OF CHESTERFIELD

(1694 – 1773)

PHILIP DORMER STANHOPE, Fourth Earl of Chesterfield, was born in London on 22nd September, 1694. He was the son of the third earl; his mother was a daughter of George Savile, Marquess of Halifax (q.v.). He was educated privately and at Trinity Hall, Cambridge, where he spent a studious year, afterwards blowing away the cobwebs of academic learning by going for the grand tour. The accession of George I induced him to return home, and he was appointed gentleman of the bedchamber to the Prince of Wales, and elected M.P. for St. Germans. That was the beginning of a public career which lasted until 1748. He was appointed captain of the gentlemen-pensioners in 1723, but his career was impeded by his resolute opposition to Walpole. In 1726 he succeeded to the earldom, and from 1728 to 1732 he was British

Ambassador at The Hague. In 1730 a temporary reconciliation with Walpole brought him the Garter and the office of Lord Steward of the Household, from which post he was dismissed on account of his opposition to the Excise Bill (1733). He offended the king by marrying his illegitimate half-sister, the Countess of Walsingham, and was for many years a thorn in the side of the monarch and his Prime Minister. He was largely responsible for the fall of Walpole, and was leader of the opposition in the House of Lords, but entered the Pelham ministry when Carteret retired. In 1745 he became Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and though he held office for a bare nine months, he made his mark on Irish history. It was mainly due to his tactful and sympathetic handling of the situation that Ireland, where the seeds

of sedition have ever found but too kindly a soil, remained at peace while rebellion was raging in Scotland and England. From 1746 to 1748 he was Secretary of State for the Northern Department; he then refused a dukedom and virtually retired from public life, though he was partly responsible for the reform of the calendar in 1752. He was a generous patron of literature, though his unfortunate relations with Johnson, which culminated in the famous letter (1755), have destroyed his reputation in this respect. Johnson was unduly proud and sensitive, and his repulse was due, not to the earl himself, but to one of his lackeys. Increasing deafness withdrew Chesterfield more and more from the world of affairs, and he passed his last years peacefully with his books, his pictures, and his gardens. One of the *bons mots* of his later days is well known: "Tyrawley" (a friend and contemporary) "and I have been dead these two years, but we do not choose to have it known." He managed to die, in the usually accepted sense of that word, on 24th March, 1773, retaining his urbanity to the last. He was famous not only as a brilliant statesman, but also, in spite of certain natural defects such as low stature and bad teeth, as the *beau ideal* of a fine gentleman.

His political and journalistic writings are now quite forgotten, and he is remembered in literary history as the author of two series of letters, the *Letters to his Son* and the *Letters to his Godson*. Neither series was intended to be seen by any eye save that of the recipient. The earlier and more famous series was addressed to

Philip Stanhope (1732-1768), his natural son by Mademoiselle du Bouchet, and commenced when the boy was five. The son, though a man of no great ability, received several diplomatic appointments, and was minister at Dresden when his early death took place. After his death it was found that he had been secretly married, and had left behind two sons and a widow, who sold the *Letters* to Dodsley for £1500 the year after Chesterfield died. The second series of letters was also addressed to a Philip Stanhope (1755-1815), Chesterfield's godson and distant kinsman, who succeeded him as fifth earl. These letters, which were written between 1761 and 1770, number in all 236, and were not published (with a few exceptions) until 1890, when they were edited by the Earl of Carnarvon. They are valuable, but not so valuable as the first series, of which Dr. Johnson most unjustly said that they taught "the morals of a whore and the manners of a dancing-master". Both series are admirably written, and inculcate a worldly system of conduct which is by no means bad or selfish. It has been said that the maxims are just those which Horace might have impressed on his son, if he had had a son. Chesterfield's *Letters* may always be read with pleasure for their style, for the light they throw on the times, and for their worldliness, which is an agreeable antidote to too much other-worldliness. It should never be forgotten that they were not written for publication. That fact lessens their resemblance to a Book of Etiquette such as that which, written by no less an authority

than the wife of a Lord Mayor, determined every action of Rose Maybud in *Ruddigore*. Chesterfield had the misfortune to fall foul of Johnson and of Horace Walpole, and to be misrepresented

by Dickens as Sir John Chester in *Barnaby Rudge*.

[E. Ernst, *Memoirs of the Life of the Fourth Earl of Chesterfield*; W. H. Craig, *Life of Lord Chesterfield*.]

From "Letters to his Son"

LONDON, June 24, O.S. 1751.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Air, address, manners, and graces, are of such infinite advantage to whoever has them, and so peculiarly and essentially necessary for you, that now, as the time of our meeting draws near, I tremble for fear that I should not find you possessed of them; and, to tell you the truth, I doubt you are not yet sufficiently convinced of their importance. There is, for instance, your intimate friend, Mr. H(ayes), who, with great merit, deep knowledge, and a thousand good qualities, will never make a figure in the world while he lives: Why? Merely for want of those external and showish accomplishments which he began the world too late to acquire; and which, with his studious and philosophical turn, I believe he thinks are not worth his attention. He may very probably make a figure in the republic of letters; but he had ten thousand times better make a figure as a man of the world and of business in the republic of the United Provinces; which, take my word for it, he never will.

As I open myself, without the least reserve, whenever I think that my doing so can be of any use to you, I will give you a short account of myself when I first came into the world, which was at the age you are of now, so that (by the way) you have got the start of me in that important article by two or three years at least. At nineteen, I left the university of Cambridge, where I was an absolute pedant: when I talked my best, I quoted Horace; when I had a mind to be a fine gentleman, I talked Ovid. I was convinced that none but the ancients had common sense; that the classics contained everything that was either necessary, useful, or ornamental to men; and I was not without thoughts of wearing the *toga virilis* of the Romans, instead of the vulgar and illiberal dress of the moderns. With these excellent notions, I went first to the Hague, where by the help of several letters of recommendation I was soon introduced into all the best company, and where I very soon discovered that I was totally mistaken in almost every one notion I had entertained. Fortunately I had a strong desire to please (the mixed result of good-nature, and a vanity by no means blameable), and was sensible that I had nothing but the desire. I therefore resolved, if possible, to acquire the means too. I studied attentively and minutely the dress, the air, the manner,

the address, and the turn of conversation of all those whom I found to be the people in fashion, and most generally allowed to please. I imitated them as well as I could: if I heard that one man was reckoned remarkably genteel, I carefully watched his dress, motions, and attitudes, and formed my own upon them. When I heard of another whose conversation was agreeable and engaging, I listened and attended to the turn of it. I addressed myself, though *de très mauvaise grace*, to all the most fashionable fine ladies; confessed and laughed with them at my own awkwardness and rawness, recommending myself as an object for them to try their skill in forming. By these means, and with a passionate desire of pleasing every body, I came by degrees to please some; and I can assure you, that what little figure I have made in the world, has been much more owing to that passionate desire I had of pleasing universally, than to any intrinsic merit or sound knowledge I might ever have been master of. My passion for pleasing was so strong (I am very glad it was so), that I own to you fairly, I wished to make every woman I saw in love with me, and every man I met with admire me. Without this passion for the object, I should never have been so attentive to the means; and I own I cannot conceive how it is possible for any man of good-nature and good sense to be without this passion. Does not good-nature incline us to please all those we converse with, of whatever rank or station they may be? And does not good sense and common observation show of what infinite use it is to please? Oh! but one may please by the good qualities of the heart, and the knowledge of the head, without that fashionable air, address, and manner, which is mere tinsel. I deny it. A man may be esteemed and respected, but I defy him to please without them. Moreover, at your age, I would not have contented myself with barely pleasing; I wanted to shine and to distinguish myself in the world as a man of fashion and gallantry, as well as business. And that ambition or vanity, call it what you please, was a right one; it hurt nobody, and made me exert whatever talents I had. It is the spring of a thousand right and good things.

I was talking you over the other day with one very much your friend, and who had often been with you, both at Paris and in Italy. Among the innumerable questions which you may be sure I asked him concerning you, I happened to mention your dress, (for, to say the truth, it was the only thing of which I thought him a competent judge), upon which he said that you dressed tolerably well at Paris; but that in Italy you dressed so ill, that he used to joke with you upon it, and even to tear your clothes. Now, I must tell you, that at your age it is as ridiculous not to be very well dressed, as at my age it would be if I were to wear a white feather and red-heeled shoes. Dress is one of the various ingredients that contribute to the art of pleasing; it pleases the eyes at least, and more especially of women. Address yourself to the senses if you would please;

dazzle the eyes, soothe and flatter the ears of mankind; engage their heart, and let their reason do its worst against you. *Suaviter in modo* is the great secret. Whenever you find yourself engaged insensibly in favour of anybody of no superior merit or distinguished talent, examine and see what it is that has made those impressions upon you: you will find it to be that *douceur*, that gentleness of manners, that air and address, which I have so often recommended to you; and from thence draw this obvious conclusion, that what pleases you in them will please others in you; for we are all made of the same clay, though some of the lumps are a little finer, and some a little coarser: but, in general, the surest way to judge of others is to examine and analyse one's self thoroughly. When we meet, I will assist you in that analysis, in which every man wants some assistance against his own self-love. Adieu.

GILBERT WHITE

(1720 – 1793)

GILBERT WHITE was born at Selborne, Hampshire, with which his name is indissolubly connected, on 18th July, 1720. He came of a clerical family, though his father was a barrister. He was educated by the elder Thomas Warton at the grammar school at Basingstoke, and at Oriel College, Oxford, where he graduated B.A. in 1743 and M.A. in 1746. In 1744 he was elected a fellow of his college, and he was ordained deacon in 1747. He spent most of his life in the neighbourhood of Selborne, holding various curacies and livings and discharging some of his duties by deputy. He was university proctor and Dean of Oriel in 1752; the most exciting event in his placid existence was when, in 1757, he was almost elected Provost of Oriel. He died at his home, The Wakes, Selborne, on 26th June, 1793.

White's famous book, *The Natural History of Selborne*, was first published in 1789. It consists

of a series of letters addressed by White to two friends, Thomas Pennant (1726–1798), traveller and naturalist, author of *A Tour in Scotland* and of *British Zoology*, and the Hon. Daines Barrington (1727–1800), lawyer, antiquary, and naturalist. The letters were written between 1767 and 1787. The book at once became popular and has for long ranked as a classic—perhaps our only classic among natural history books. It has become the object of what may be called a cult among field-naturalists; but it has charmed many who are not experts or even specially interested in natural history. Its appeal is not unlike that of the even more charming *Compleat Angler*, nor is it easy to say upon what that appeal depends. It is written in a plain but vivid style, with touches of quiet humour, and is quite devoid of every trace of pretentiousness. The informality of the epistolary form in which it is written is

doubtless one of its attractions. White, moreover, was a keen and patient observer, who kept his eye firmly fixed on the object, and testified to what he had seen and heard. He was fortunate in writing when the study of natural history was in a transition stage; naturalists had advanced far beyond the wonder tales of Pliny and the mediæval bestiaries; but though they were no longer indebted to their imaginations for their facts, they had not yet begun to compile scientific manuals of no more interest, save

to experts, than *Bradshaw's Guide*. White's book may be criticized as desultory, but it has won more converts to the study of natural history than many more systematic works; while to the mere lover of literature it is one of the most soothing and restful books in the language.

[R. Holt-White, *Life and Letters of Gilbert White*; Henry C. Shelley, *Gilbert White and Selborne*; the standard edition of the *Natural History* is that of Thomas Bell (2 vols., 1877).]

From "The Natural History of Selborne"

LETTER LXXXV

SELBORNE, Sept. 9, 1778.

DEAR SIR,—From the motion of birds, the transition is natural enough to their notes and language, of which I shall say something. Not that I would pretend to understand their language like a vizier, who, by the recital of a conversation which passed between two owls, reclaimed a sultan, before delighting in conquest and devastation; but I would be thought only to mean, that many of the winged tribes have various sounds and voices adapted to express their various passions, wants, and feelings, such as anger, fear, love, hatred, hunger, and the like. All species are not equally eloquent; some are copious and fluent, as it were, in their utterance, while others are confined to a few important sounds; no bird, like the fish kind, is quite mute, though some are rather silent. The language of birds is very ancient, and, like other ancient modes of speech, very elliptical; little is said, but much is meant and understood.

The notes of the eagle kind are shrill and piercing; and about the season of nidification much diversified, as I have been often assured by a curious observer of Nature, who long resided at Gibraltar, where eagles abound. The notes of our hawks much resemble those of the king of birds. Owls have very expressive notes; they hoot in a fine vocal sound, much resembling the *vox humana*, and reducible by a pitch-pipe to a musical key. This note seems to express complacency and rivalry among the males. They use also a quick call and a horrible scream; and can snore and hiss when they mean to menace. Ravens, besides their loud croak, can exert a deep and solemn note that makes the woods to echo; the amorous sound of a crow is strange and ridiculous; rooks, in

the breeding season, attempt sometimes, in the gaiety of their hearts, to sing, but with no great success; the parrot kind have many modulations of voice, as appears by their aptitude to learn human sounds; doves coo in an amorous and mournful manner, and are emblems of despairing lovers; the woodpecker sets up a sort of loud and hearty laugh; the fern-owl, or goat-sucker, from the dusk till daybreak, serenades his mate with the clattering of castanets. All the tuneful *passeres* express their complacency by sweet modulations and a variety of melody. The swallow, as has been observed in a former letter, by a shrill alarm, bespeaks the attention of the other *hirundines*, and bids them be aware that the hawk is at hand. Aquatic and gregarious birds, especially the nocturnal, that shift their quarters in the dark, are very noisy and loquacious; as cranes, wild geese, wild ducks, and the like: their perpetual clamour prevents them from dispersing and losing their companions.

In so extensive a subject, sketches and outlines are as much as can be expected: for it would be endless to instance in all the infinite variety of the feathered nation. We shall therefore confine the remainder of this letter to the few domestic fowls of our yards, which are most known, and therefore best understood. At first,—the peacock, with his gorgeous train, demands our attention; but, like most of the gaudy birds, his notes are grating and shocking to the ear: the yelling of cats, and the braying of an ass, are not more disgusting. The voice of the goose is trumpet-like and clanking, and once saved the Capitol at Rome, as grave historians assert; the hiss also of the gander is formidable and full of menace, and “protective of his young”. Among ducks, the sexual distinction of voice is remarkable; for, while the quack of the female is loud and sonorous, the voice of the drake is inward, and harsh, and feeble, and scarce discernible. The cock-turkey struts and gobbles to his mistress in a most uncouth manner; he hath also a pert and petulant note when he attacks his adversary. When a hen-turkey leads forth her young brood, she keeps a watchful eye; and if a bird of prey appear, though ever so high in the air, the careful mother announces the enemy with a loud inward moan, and watches him with a steady and attentive look; but if he approach, her note becomes earnest and alarming, and her outcries are redoubled.

No inhabitants of a yard seem possessed of such a variety of expression, and so copious a language, as common poultry. Take a chicken of four or five days old, and hold it up to a window where there are flies, and it will immediately seize its prey with little twitterings of complacency; but if you tender it a wasp or a bee, at once its note becomes harsh, and expressive of disapprobation and a sense of danger. When a pullet is ready to lay, she intimates the event by a joyous and easy soft note. Of all the occurrences of their life, that of laying seems to be the most important; for no sooner has a hen disburdened herself than she rushes forth with a

clamorous kind of joy, which the cock and the rest of his mistresses immediately adopt. The tumult is not confined to the family concerned, but catches from yard to yard, and spreads to every homestead within hearing, till at last the whole village is in an uproar. As soon as a hen becomes a mother, her new relation demands a new language; she then runs clucking and screaming about, and seems agitated as if possessed. The father of the flock has also a considerable vocabulary; if he finds food, he calls a favourite concubine to partake; and if a bird of prey passes over, with a warning voice he bids his family beware. The gallant chanticleer has at command his amorous phrases and his terms of defiance. But the sound by which he is best known is his crowing: by this he has been distinguished in all ages as the countryman's clock or larum—as the watchman that proclaims the divisions of the night. Thus the poet elegantly styles him

. . . the crested cock, whose clarion sounds
The silent hours.

A neighbouring gentleman, one summer, had lost most of his chickens by a sparrow-hawk, that came gliding down between a fagot pile and the end of his house to the place where the coops stood. The owner, inwardly vexed to see his flock thus diminishing, hung a setting net adroitly between the pile and the house, into which the caitiff dashed, and was entangled. Resentment suggested the law of retaliation; he therefore clipped the hawk's wings, cut off his talons, and, fixing a cork on his bill, threw him down among the brood-hens. Imagination cannot paint the scene that ensued; the expressions that fear, rage, and revenge inspired were new, or at least such as had been unnoticed before. The exasperated matrons upbraided—they execrated—they insulted—they triumphed. In a word, they never desisted from buffeting their adversary till they had torn him in a hundred pieces.

EDWARD GIBBON

(1737 – 1794)

EDWARD GIBBON was born at Putney on 27th April, 1737. His father was a gentleman of an old Kentish family. He was the sole survivor of a family of seven, his five brothers and one sister having died in infancy. His health, until he reached his sixteenth year, was

very weak, so his education was irregular and spasmodic. He was at school at Kingston-on-Thames, and was for two years at Westminster, too often prostrated by a strange nervous affection to benefit from its curriculum. For a short time he was a pupil of Dr. Philip

Francis, father of the alleged author of the *Letters of Junius*; three weeks before his fifteenth birthday he was entered as a gentleman-commoner at Magdalen College, Oxford. "To the University of Oxford," he afterwards wrote, "I acknowledge no obligation; and she will as cheerfully renounce me for a son, as I am willing to disclaim her for a mother. I spent fourteen months at Magdalen College; they proved the fourteen months the most idle and unprofitable of my whole life: the reader will pronounce between the school and the scholar: but I cannot affect to believe that nature had disqualified me for all literary pursuits." Gibbon's departure from Oxford was as abrupt as his stay there had been unprofitable. He was converted to the Roman Catholic faith, and removed himself from Oxford to anticipate his expulsion. His conversion, though temporary, was quite sincere, and put him to no little inconvenience; even at that early age Gibbon had a liking for ease and comfort, and would not have vexed his father and the college authorities merely for the sake of a whim. His father bore the blow well, and, having tried what the conversation of the deist David Mallet (q.v.) would do, sent his son to a M. Pavilliard, a learned Calvinistic minister at Lausanne. He arrived at Lausanne on 30th June, 1753; a year and a half later he publicly announced his reconversion to Protestantism, but he remained abroad until the summer of 1758. His stay there was most profitable; he learnt French thoroughly, temporarily forgetting his English as he did so; he read widely and deeply; he

entirely threw off all his insularity; and he became a rationalist. He was for a time engaged to be married to Susanne Curchod, afterwards the wife of Necker the financier and mother of Mme. de Staël; but his father was opposed to the match, and Gibbon dutifully "sighed as a lover, but obeyed as a son". On his return to England he began to collect a good library, and read incessantly. His studies were partially interrupted in 1759, when he joined the Hampshire militia, which was then embodied, and served with it more or less continuously at various towns in the south of England for two and a half years. He felt deeply the lack of opportunity for study, but his military experiences widened his knowledge of men and officialdom, and, as he felt himself, "the captain of the Hampshire grenadiers (the reader may smile) has not been useless to the historian of the Roman empire". In 1761 he published his first book, in French; its title was *Essai sur l'Étude de la Littérature*. It made a slight stir on the Continent, but was neglected in England. In 1763 he made use of his regained liberty to go on his travels; he visited Paris and Lausanne, and during 1764 journeyed in Italy. To give his own words: "It was at Rome, on 15th of October, 1764, as I sat musing amidst the ruins of the Capitol, while the barefooted friars were singing vespers in the Temple of Jupiter, that the idea of writing the decline and fall of the city first started to my mind." In 1765 he returned to England and resumed his studies. He divided his time between Buriton in Hampshire and London, and, until 1770, he drilled

for a month each year with the militia. In 1770 he published a pamphlet entitled *Critical Observations on the Sixth Book of the Aeneid*, a somewhat acrimonious attack upon Warburton. In 1774 he obtained a seat in Parliament for Liskeard, and was a silent supporter of the North administration and its American policy for eight years. In 1776 the first volume of his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* was published, and at once made a public reputation for its author. In 1778 he drew up on behalf of the English Government a *Mémoire Justificatif* in answer to the manifesto of the French court, and for this service he was made one of the Lords of Trade. Volumes II and III of his history were published in 1781. The Board of Trade was abolished in 1783, and Gibbon lost his appointment. In September of that year he settled at Lausanne, with a view to economizing and to securing more leisure for his great work. At last it was finished. "It was on the day, or rather night, of the 27th of June, 1787, between the hours of eleven and twelve, that I wrote the last lines of the last page, in a summer-house in my garden. After laying down my pen, I took several turns in a *berceau*, or covered walk of acacias, which commands a prospect of the country, the lake, and the mountains. The air was temperate, the sky was serene, the silver orb of the moon was reflected from the waters, and all nature was silent. I will not dissemble the first emotions of joy on recovery of my freedom, and, perhaps, the establishment of my fame. But my pride was soon humbled, and a sober melancholy was spread over

my mind, by the idea that I had taken an everlasting leave of an old and agreeable companion, and that whatsoever might be the future date of my *History*, the life of the historian must be short and precarious." The three remaining volumes were published together in 1788. He left Lausanne in 1793, and died, of a complaint which he had neglected for thirty-two years, on 16th January, 1794. In 1796 his friend Lord Sheffield published two quarto volumes of his miscellaneous works, of which the most valuable part is the *Memoirs of my Life and Writings*, usually known as the *Autobiography*. It is something in the nature of a Diatesseron, being a judicious blend of six different sketches. The noble editor performed his task well; he did not tamper unduly with his text, except in a few places, and in his Advertisement he confessed quite candidly what he had done. The six sketches were printed verbatim in 1896, but most readers will prefer the *textus receptus* which appeared a hundred years previously.

The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire is undoubtedly the greatest historical work in our language; indeed it may be argued that the world does not contain another history so grandly planned and so ably executed. There are in it some faults of detail; it would be strange if a hundred and fifty years' rummaging in the dust-heaps of antiquity had not elicited many new facts of importance. But these flaws are trifling; Gibbon, unlike Hume and Robertson, has not been superseded, nor is he ever likely to be. It is noteworthy that several eminent historians have been con-

tent with editing Gibbon, fully realizing the vanity of redoing his work. He is at once graphic and accurate; he had the gift of getting what was essential from his sources, and of correctly assessing their value. His wide learning puts to shame the narrow specialism of a later date; his broad, sweeping narrative has the grandeur of the events which it relates. His insight into human nature in every variety of circumstances is that of a great and philosophical historian. His life was an ideal one for an historian; he was always in easy circumstances, and never had to work for a livelihood; he never was one of the "monks of Oxford", but lived as a man of the world; his military and parliamentary experiences gave him insight into strategy and legislation; and he had an ideal retreat at Lausanne. His health was good, and his industry almost incredible. His *Autobiography* is not only one of the most entertaining but also

one of the most candid books of its kind in English; his *Letters* are most admirable; but it is, of course, to the *Decline and Fall* that he owes his immortality, and immortality is not easily won by an historian. He would not have won it had he not also been a consummate man of letters. His grand Ciceronian style has been condemned as monotonous, but it is admirably suited to its subject, and has a charm of its own. We may say of Gibbon that his

ocean-roll of rhythm sounds for ever of Imperial Rome,

and that, in prose, he is the

Wielder of the stateliest measure
ever moulded by the lips of man.

[J. C. Morison, *Gibbon* (English Men of Letters Series); Lord Ernle, *Private Letters of Edward Gibbon*; W. Bagehot, *Estimates of some Englishmen and Scotchmen*.]

From "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire"

THE EMPEROR COMMODUS

The influence of a polite age, and the labour of an attentive education, had never been able to infuse into his rude and brutish mind the least tincture of learning; and he was the first of the Roman emperors totally devoid of taste for the pleasures of the understanding. Nero himself excelled, or affected to excel, in the elegant arts of music and poetry; nor should we despise his pursuits, had he not converted the pleasing relaxation of a leisure hour into the serious business and ambition of his life. But Commodus, from his earliest infancy, discovered an aversion to whatever was rational or liberal, and a fond attachment to the amusements of the populace; the sports of the circus and amphitheatre, the combats of gladiators, and the hunting of wild beasts. The masters in every branch of learning, whom Marcus provided for his son, were heard with in-

attention and disgust; whilst the Moors and Parthians, who taught him to dart the javelin and to shoot with the bow, found a disciple who delighted in his application, and soon equalled the most skilful of his instructors, in the steadiness of the eye, and the dexterity of the hand.

The servile crowd, whose fortune depended on their master's vices, applauded these ignoble pursuits. The perfidious voice of flattery reminded him, that by exploits of the same nature, by the defeat of the Nemaean lion, and the slaughter of the wild boar of Erymanthus, the Grecian Hercules had acquired a place among the gods, and an immortal memory among men. They only forgot to observe, that, in the first ages of society, when the fiercer animals often dispute with man the possession of an unsettled country, a successful war against those savages is one of the most innocent and beneficial labours of heroism. In the civilized state of the Roman empire, the wild beasts had long since retired from the face of man, and the neighbourhood of populous cities. To surprise them in their solitary haunts, and to transport them to Rome, that they might be slain in pomp by the hand of an emperor, was an enterprise equally ridiculous for the prince, and oppressive for the people. Ignorant of these distinctions, Commodus eagerly embraced the glorious resemblance, and styled himself (as we still read on his medals) the *Roman Hercules*. The club and the lion's hide were placed by the side of the throne, amongst the ensigns of sovereignty; and statues were erected, in which Commodus was represented in the character, and with the attributes, of the god, whose valour and dexterity he endeavoured to emulate in the daily course of his ferocious amusements.

Elated with these praises, which gradually extinguished the innate sense of shame, Commodus resolved to exhibit, before the eyes of the Roman people, those exercises, which till then he had decently confined within the walls of his palace, and to the presence of a few favourites. On the appointed day, the various motives of flattery, fear, and curiosity, attracted to the amphitheatre an innumerable multitude of spectators; and some degree of applause was deservedly bestowed on the uncommon skill of the Imperial performer. Whether he aimed at the head or heart of the animal, the wound was alike certain and mortal. With arrows whose point was shaped into the form of a crescent, Commodus often intercepted the rapid career, and cut asunder the long bony neck of the ostrich. A panther was let loose; and the archer waited till he had leaped upon a trembling malefactor. In the same instant the shaft flew, the beast dropt dead, and the man remained unhurt. The dens of the amphitheatre disgorged at once a hundred lions; a hundred darts from the unerring hand of Commodus laid them dead as they ran raging round the Arena. Neither the huge bulk of the elephant, nor the scaly hide of the rhinoceros, could defend them from his stroke. Aethiopia and India yielded their most extraordinary productions; and several animals were

slain in the amphitheatre, which had been seen only in the representations of art, or perhaps of fancy. In all these exhibitions, the securest precautions were used to protect the person of the Roman Hercules from the desperate spring of any savage, who might possibly disregard the dignity of the emperor, and the sanctity of the god.

But the meanest of the populace were affected with shame and indignation when they beheld their sovereign enter the lists as a gladiator, and glory in a profession which the laws and manners of the Romans had branded with the justest note of infamy. He chose the habit and arms of the *Secutor*, whose combat with the *Retiarius* formed one of the most lively scenes in the bloody sports of the amphitheatre. The *Secutor* was armed with an helmet, sword, and buckler; his naked antagonist had only a large net and a trident; with the one he endeavoured to entangle, with the other to dispatch his enemy. If he missed the first throw, he was obliged to fly from the pursuit of the *Secutor*, till he had prepared his net for a second cast. The emperor fought in this character seven hundred and thirty-five several times. These glorious achievements were carefully recorded in the public acts of the empire; and that he might omit no circumstance of infamy, he received from the common fund of gladiators, a stipend so exorbitant that it became a new and most ignominious tax upon the Roman people. It may be easily supposed, that in these engagements the master of the world was always successful: in the amphitheatre his victories were not often sanguinary; but when he exercised his skill in the school of gladiators, or his own palace, his wretched antagonists were frequently honoured with a mortal wound from the hand of Commodus, and obliged to seal their flattery with their blood. He now disdained the appellation of Hercules. The name of Paulus, a celebrated *Secutor*, was the only one which delighted his ear. It was inscribed on his colossal statues, and repeated in the redoubled acclamations of the mournful and applauding senate. Claudius Pompeianus, the virtuous husband of Lucilla, was the only senator who asserted the honour of his rank. As a father, he permitted his sons to consult their safety by attending the amphitheatre. As a Roman, he declared, that his own life was in the emperor's hands, but that he would never behold the son of Marcus prostituting his person and dignity. Notwithstanding his manly resolution, Pompeianus escaped the resentment of the tyrant, and, with his honour, had the good fortune to preserve his life.

Commodus had now attained the summit of vice and infamy. Amidst the acclamations of a flattering court, he was unable to disguise from himself, that he had deserved the contempt and hatred of every man of sense and virtue in his empire. His ferocious spirit was irritated by the consciousness of that hatred, by the envy of every kind of merit, by the just apprehension of danger, and by the habit of slaughter, which he contracted in his daily amusements. History has preserved a long list of

consular senators sacrificed to his wanton suspicion, which sought out, with peculiar anxiety, those unfortunate persons connected, however remotely, with the family of the Antonines, without sparing even the ministers of his crimes or pleasures. His cruelty proved at last fatal to himself. He had shed with impunity the noblest blood of Rome: he perished as soon as he was dreaded by his own domestics. Marcia, his favourite concubine, Eclectus his chamberlain, and Laetus his Praetorian praefect, alarmed by the fate of their companions and predecessors, resolved to prevent the destruction which every hour hung over their heads, either from the mad caprice of the tyrant, or the sudden indignation of the people. Marcia seized the occasion of presenting a draught of wine to her lover, after he had fatigued himself with hunting some wild beasts. Commodus retired to sleep; but whilst he was labouring with the effects of poison and drunkenness, a robust youth, by profession a wrestler, entered his chamber, and strangled him without resistance. The body was secretly conveyed out of the palace, before the least suspicion was entertained in the city, or even in the court, of the emperor's death. Such was the fate of the son of Marcus, and so easy was it to destroy a hated tyrant, who, by the artificial powers of government, had oppressed, during thirteen years, so many millions of subjects, each of whom was equal to their master in personal strength and personal abilities.

From the "Autobiography"

Had I believed that the majority of English readers were so fondly attached even to the name and shadow of Christianity; had I foreseen that the pious, the timid, and the prudent, would feel, or affect to feel, with such exquisite sensibility, I might, perhaps, have softened the two invidious chapters, which would create many enemies, and conciliate few friends. But the shaft was shot, the alarm was sounded, and I could only rejoice, that if the voice of our priests was clamorous and bitter, their hands were disarmed from the powers of persecution. I adhered to the wise resolution of trusting myself and my writings to the candour of the public, till Mr. Davies of Oxford presumed to attack, not the faith, but the fidelity, of the historian. My *Vindication*, expressive of less anger than contempt, amused for a moment the busy and idle metropolis; and the most rational part of the laity, and even of the clergy, appear to have been satisfied of my innocence and accuracy. I would not print this *Vindication* in quarto, lest it should be bound and preserved with the history itself. At the distance of twelve years, I calmly affirm my judgment of Davies, Chelsum, &c. A victory over such antagonists was a sufficient humiliation. They, however, were rewarded in this world. Poor Chelsum was indeed neglected; and I dare not boast the making Dr. Watson a bishop; he is

a prelate of a large mind and liberal spirit: but I enjoyed the pleasure of giving a royal pension to Mr. Davies, and of collating Dr. Apthorpe to an archiepiscopal living. Their success encouraged the zeal of Taylor the Arian, and Milner the Methodist, with many others, whom it would be difficult to remember, and tedious to rehearse. The list of my adversaries, however, was graced with the more respectable names of Dr. Priestley, Sir David Dalrymple, and Dr. White; and every polemic, of either University, discharged his sermon or pamphlet against the impenetrable silence of the Roman historian. In his *History of the Corruptions of Christianity*, Dr. Priestley threw down his two gauntlets to Bishop Hurd and Mr. Gibbon. I declined the challenge in a letter, exhorting my opponent to enlighten the world by his philosophical discoveries, and to remember that the merit of his predecessor Servetus is now reduced to a single passage, which indicates the smaller circulation of the blood through the lungs, from and to the heart. Instead of listening to this friendly advice, the dauntless philosopher of Birmingham continued to fire away his double battery against those who believed too little, and those who believed too much. From my replies he has nothing to hope or fear; but his Socinian shield has repeatedly been pierced by the mighty spear of Horsley, and his trumpet of sedition may at length awaken the magistrates of a free country.

The profession and rank of Sir David Dalrymple (now a Lord of Session) has given a more decent colour to his style. But he scrutinized each separate passage of the two chapters with the dry minuteness of a special pleader; and as he was always solicitous to make, he may have succeeded sometimes in finding, a flaw. In his *Annals of Scotland*, he has shown himself a diligent collector and an accurate critic.

I have praised, and I still praise, the eloquent sermons which were preached in St. Mary's pulpit at Oxford by Dr. White. If he assaulted me with some degree of illiberal acrimony, in such a place, and before such an audience, he was obliged to speak the language of the country. I smiled at a passage in one of his private letters to Mr. Badcock: "The part where we encounter Gibbon must be brilliant and striking."

In a sermon preached before the University of Cambridge, Dr. Edwards complimented a work, "which can only perish with the language itself"; and esteems the author a formidable enemy. He is, indeed, astonished that more learning and ingenuity has not been shown in the defence of Israel; that the prelates and dignitaries of the Church (alas, good man!) did not vie with each other whose stones should sink the deepest in the forehead of this Goliath!

"But the force of truth will oblige us to confess, that in the attacks which have been levelled against our sceptical historian, we can discover but slender traces of profound and exquisite erudition, of solid criticism and accurate investigation; but we are too frequently disgusted by vague and inconclusive reasoning; by unseasonable banter and senseless witti-

cisms; by embittered bigotry and enthusiastic jargon; by futile cavils and illiberal invectives. Proud and elated by the weakness of his antagonists, he condescends not to handle the sword of controversy."

Let me frankly own that I was startled at the first discharge of ecclesiastical ordnance; but as soon as I found that this empty noise was mischievous only in the intention, my fear was converted into indignation; and every feeling of indignation or curiosity has long since subsided in pure and placid indifference.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

(1706 - 1790)

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN was born at Boston on 17th January, 1706. His father was a tallow-chandler. He was the fifteenth of seventeen children, and was at first intended for the ministry, but was placed instead with his brother, a printer, to serve an apprenticeship to that trade. His brother having started the *New England Courant*, Franklin secretly wrote some pieces for it, and had the satisfaction of finding them well received. After a disagreement with his brother, he left his employment, and at the age of seventeen started for Philadelphia, where he found work as a compositor. Here he attracted the notice of Sir William Keith, the Governor of Pennsylvania, who induced him to go to England for the purpose of purchasing types to establish himself in business. He got work in a printing-office, and after a residence of eighteen months in London returned to Philadelphia. His newspaper, *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, greatly increased his reputation. He became a prominent figure in Philadelphia, and established there a public library, an

improved system of education, and a scheme of insurance, amongst other benefactions. In 1732 he published his *Poor Richard's Almanack*, which continued to be issued till 1757. His scientific experiments led him to identify lightning and electricity, and to invent the lightning-conductor. In 1757 he was sent to England as agent for Pennsylvania and other provinces, and he remained in England for five years. He was again appointed agent in 1764, and brought to England a remonstrance against the project of taxing the colonies. He opposed the Stamp Act, and in 1774 presented to the king the petition of the first American Congress, and exerted all his influence in favour of the Declaration of Independence. In 1776 he was sent to France as commissioner plenipotentiary, to obtain supplies from that court. After the surrender of Burgoyne, he concluded with France the first treaty of the new states with a foreign power (1778), and was subsequently appointed one of the commissioners for negotiating the peace with

the mother country. On his return to his native country he filled the office of President of Pennsylvania, and served as a delegate in the Federal Convention in 1787, and approved the Constitution then formed. He died on 17th April, 1790. He is, of course, better known as a scientist and a diplomatist than as a man of letters, but his *Autobiography* is a capital work of its kind, though it ends with the year 1757. It was not published until 1817, when it

appeared with certain editorial manipulations by the illegitimate son of Franklin's illegitimate son. His political, anti-slavery, financial, economic, and scientific papers have merit, but not strictly literary merit.

[Editions of complete works by John Bigelow and by A. H. Smyth; James Parton, *Life and Times of Benjamin Franklin*; J. B. McMaster, *Benjamin Franklin as a Man of Letters*; J. T. Morse, *Benjamin Franklin*; E. Robins, *Benjamin Franklin*.]

From the "Autobiography"

At my first admission into the printing-house I took to working at press, imagining I felt a want of the bodily exercise I had been used to in America, where press-work is mixed with the composing. I drank only water; the other workmen, near 50 in number, were great drinkers of beer. On occasion I carried up and down stairs a large form of types in each hand, when others carried but one in both hands; they wondered to see from this and several instances, that the *Water-American*, as they called me, was *stronger* than themselves who drank *strong* beer! We had an ale-house boy; who attended always in the house to supply the workmen. My companion at the press drank every day a pint before breakfast, a pint at breakfast with his bread and cheese, a pint between breakfast and dinner; a pint at dinner, a pint in the afternoon about 6 o'clock, and another when he had done his day's work. I thought it a detestable custom; but it was necessary, he supposed, to drink *strong* beer that he might be *strong* to labour. I endeavoured to convince him that the bodily strength afforded by beer, could only be in proportion to the grain or flour of the barley dissolved in the water of which it was made; that there was more flour in a pennyworth of bread, and therefore if he could eat that with a pint of water, it would give him more strength than a quart of beer. He drank on however, and had four or five shillings to pay out of his wages every Saturday night for that vile liquor; an expense I was free from. And thus these poor devils keep themselves always under.

Watts, after some weeks, desiring to have me in the composing-room, I left the pressmen; a new *bien venu* for drink (being 5s.) was demanded of me by the compositors. I thought it an imposition, as I had paid one to the pressmen; the master thought so too, and forbade my paying it. I stood out two or three weeks, was accordingly considered as an ex-

communicate, and had so many little pieces of private malice practised on me, by mixing my sorts, transposing and breaking my matter, &c. &c. if ever I stept out of the room; and all ascribed to the *chapel ghost*, which they said ever haunted those not regularly admitted; that notwithstanding the master's protection, I found myself obliged to comply and pay the money; convinced of the folly of being on ill terms with those one is to live with continually. I was now on a fair footing with them, and soon acquired considerable influence. I proposed some reasonable alterations in their *chapel* laws and carried them against all opposition. From my example, a great many of them left their muddling breakfast of beer, bread and cheese, finding they could with me be supplied from a neighbouring house, with a large porringer of hot water-gruel, sprinkled with pepper, crumbled with bread, and a bit of butter in it, for the price of a pint of beer; viz. three-halfpence. This was a more comfortable as well as a cheaper breakfast, and kept their heads clearer. Those who continued sopping with their beer all day, were often, by not paying, out of credit at the alehouse, and used to make interest with me to get beer; their *light*, as they phrased it, *being out*. I watched the pay-table on Saturday night, and collected what I stood engaged for them, having to pay sometimes near thirty shillings a week on their accounts. This, and my being esteemed a pretty good *riggite*, that is a jocular verbal satirist, supported my consequence in the society. My constant attendance, (I never making a *St. Monday*) recommended me to the master; and my uncommon quickness at composing occasioned my being put upon the work of dispatch, which was generally better paid. So I went on now very agreeably.

WILLIAM COWPER

(1731 – 1800)

WILLIAM COWPER was born at Berkhamstead on 26th November, 1731. He came of a good family; his grandfather was Spencer Cowper, the judge; his father was rector of Berkhamstead, and his mother was a descendant of John Donne (q.v.). At the age of six he was sent to a boarding-school at Markyate, Herts., where he was cruelly bullied and rendered completely miserable. After two un-

happy years he left, and spent the next two years mainly in the hands of an oculist. At the age of ten he went to Westminster, where he was contemporary with Churchill the satirist and Warren Hastings. He was less miserable there than at his first school, and not only became a good Latin scholar, but excelled at football and cricket. He left school at the age of eighteen, and was articled for three years to a

solicitor, where he had for a fellow-clerk the future Lord Chancellor, Thurlow. At the expiration of his apprenticeship he took chambers in the Middle Temple, and in 1754 was called to the Bar. He took little interest in law, however, and much in literature, writing occasional papers for *The Connoisseur*. He suffered much from depression, which was aggravated when his marriage with his cousin Theodora was forbidden by her father on account of consanguinity, though he appears to have suffered less on this occasion than the lady. In 1759 he was appointed to a small sinecure, a commissionership of bankrupts. Four years later his kinsman, Major Cowper, endeavoured to obtain his appointment as clerk of the journals of the House of Lords; a public examination at the bar of the House was necessary, and dread of this, combined with thoughts of his own unfitness, drove Cowper insane. He attempted to take his life by poison, by drowning, and by hanging, and was sent to Dr. Cotton's Collegium Insanorum at St. Albans, where he remained for eighteen months. Cowper's madness was religious mania; he was overwhelmed by the harsh tenets of Calvinism, and this most innocent and harmless of men was haunted, during the thirty-five years of life which remained to him, by the thought that he was eternally damned. *Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum*. When he was released from St. Albans, he abandoned all ideas of an active career, and retired to Huntingdon, in order to be near his brother, who was a Cambridge don. Here he made the acquaintance of the Rev.

Mr. and Mrs. Unwin, whose kindness had the most soothing and beneficial influence on him, and soon became a boarder in their house (November, 1765). In July, 1767, Mr. Unwin died as the result of a fall from his horse, and soon after Cowper and Mrs. Unwin removed to Olney, in Buckinghamshire, to be near their friend, Rev. John Newton (1725-1807), who was curate in charge there. This gentleman was as quaint a character as some of those depicted in the Savoy operas; he had been the captain of a slave-ship, but never "used a big, big D"; and eventually, like the dragoons in the first draft of *Patience*, became a curate. He was a well-intentioned but grim Calvinist, and it may be doubted whether his influence upon the gentle and sensitive Cowper was salutary. Cowper turned into a kind of lay-reader, and he and Newton combined to write the *Olney Hymns* (published 1779), sixty-eight of them being written by Cowper and two hundred and eighty by Newton. Some of Cowper's hymns, such as *God moves in a mysterious way, Hark my soul! it is the Lord*, and *There is a fountain filled with blood*, are still sung throughout Christendom. Cowper had another attack of mania in 1773, and on his recovery solaced himself by painting, writing, and taming hares. Newton left Olney in 1779, and Cowper without knowing it was probably the happier in consequence. In 1781, when he was in his fiftieth year, he began to write poetry seriously. In 1782 he published his first volume, which contained *The Progress of Error, Truth, Table Talk, Expostulation*, and other poems. Its success was

only moderate. Most of these poems are satires of a kind resembling those of Horace, and Cowper was too gentle and too little a man of the world to make an efficient satirist. His friend Lady Austen, whose cheerful but too brief friendship with the poet lasted only from 1781 to 1783, suggested to him the subject of *The Task*, which, together with *Tirocinium*, formed a second volume in 1785. *The Task*, to which and not to the *Letters* Coleridge's description "divine chit-chat" is properly applied, is a delightfully discursive didactic poem in six books, written in more or less Miltonic blank verse. Its descriptions of nature are vivid and accurate, and were written from direct observation; like Shakespeare, Cowper did not need the spectacles of books to read nature. Fauns, Dryads, and other such wild-fowl are conspicuously absent from his pages. *The Task* firmly established Cowper's poetic fame. *Tirocinium*, an attack on public schools, is in his less pleasing because more satiric vein. *The Diverting History of John Gilpin* was also due to the suggestion of Lady Austen. The translation of Homer, begun in 1784, occupied Cowper for the next six years, and was published in 1791. He translated his regular forty lines a day, and enjoyed his task. His translation cannot be called a failure, but it is certainly not a success. Dullness is its chief fault, but it is not fortunate in its metre, which is blank-verse. Homer and Cowper were not kindred spirits; we can imagine that, like Herbert Spencer, Cowper found the *Iliad* too sanguinary to win his complete approval. While at work on Homer, Cowper

removed from Olney to Weston, a village near by (1786); and in 1787 had a recurrence of suicidal mania, endeavouring to hang himself. He was never quite right again. In the beginning of 1794 he was again attacked by madness, which was aggravated by the death of Mrs. Unwin in 1796. He often spoke and wrote of Mrs. Unwin as his second mother; but it is now known that they would have been married but for his attack of madness in 1773. The revision of his Homer, and the composition of some short pieces, occupied the last years of his life, which were spent at East Dereham, in Norfolk. He died on 25th April, 1800.

Few poets have been less revolutionary in their characters than Cowper, and yet he undoubtedly heralded the revolution in poetry which was led by Wordsworth and Coleridge. He did this simply by being natural, simply by being himself. The contrast between a poem such as *The Task* and even an excellent artificial poem like *The Traveller* is most marked. The spirit of Pope was ever sitting at Goldsmith's elbow; we know that Cowper despised Pope as an Homeric translator and as a letter-writer, and we may conjecture that he did not subscribe to the Popian theory of the art of poetry in general. The chief elements of Cowper's poetry are a love of nature and a faithful description of her, a strong sympathy with animals and with the weak and oppressed among mankind, playful humour, and tender pathos. He is not strong enough nor well-enough acquainted with life to rank as a great poet; among poets of the secondary kind he is one of the

most charming and companionable. His delightful *Letters* are perhaps the best in the language, being absolutely natural, graceful, and frank. He has the gift of making trivialities interesting, partly by writing in so easy and attractive a style, and partly by displaying when writing his own engaging personality. The story of his life is one of the saddest in the annals of English literature; his gentle, playful spirit was overwhelmed by the harsh barbarities of a false system of belief; his religion, which should have been his comfort, was

his bane. Had he been "a Pagan suckled in a creed outworn" his life would have been happier; but even his constant thoughts about his own eternal perdition could not destroy his love for God and man, or eradicate his gentle humour.

[Goldwin Smith, *William Cowper* (English Men of Letters Series); Robert Southey, *Life of Cowper*; T. Wright, *The Loved Haunts of Cowper*; Sir Leslie Stephen, *Hours in a Library*; Lord David Cecil, *The Stricken Deer, or the Life of Cowper*.]

From "The Task"

BOOK IV

Hark! 'tis the twanging horn! O'er yonder bridge
That with its wearisome but needful length
Bestrides the wintry flood, in which the moon
Sees her unwrinkled face reflected bright,
He comes, the herald of a noisy world,
With spattered boots, strapped waist, and frozen locks,
News from all nations lumbering at his back.
True to his charge, the close-packed load behind,
Yet careless what he brings, his one concern
Is to conduct it to the destined inn,
And, having dropped the expected bag, pass on.
He whistles as he goes, light-hearted wretch,
Cold and yet cheerful; messenger of grief
Perhaps to thousands, and of joy to some;
To him indifferent whether grief or joy.
Houses in ashes, and the fall of stocks,
Births, deaths, and marriages, epistles wet
With tears that trickled down the writer's cheeks
Fast as the periods from his fluent quill,
Or charged with amorous sighs of absent swains,
Or nymphs responsive, equally affect
His horse and him, unconscious of them all.
But oh the important budget! ushered in
With such heart-shaking music, who can say

What are its tidings? Have our troops awaked?
Or do they still, as if with opium drugged,
Snore to the murmurs of the Atlantic wave?
Is India free? And does she wear her plumed
And jewelled turban with a smile of peace?
Or do we grind her still? The grand debate,
The popular harangue, the tart reply,
The logic, and the wisdom, and the wit,
And the loud laugh—I long to know them all;
I burn to set the imprisoned wranglers free,
And give them voice and utterance once again.

Now stir the fire, and close the shutters fast,
Let fall the curtains, wheel the sofa round,
And while the bubbling and loud-hissing urn
Throws up a steamy column, and the cups
That cheer but not inebriate, wait on each,
So let us welcome peaceful evening in.
Not such his evening, who with shining face
Sweats in the crowded theatre, and squeezed
And bored with elbow-points through both his sides,
Outsolds the ranting actor on the stage:
Nor his, who patient stands till his feet throb
And his head thumps, to feed upon the breath
Of patriots bursting with heroic rage,
Or placemen all tranquillity and smiles.
This folio of four pages, happy work!
Which not even critics criticize; that holds
Inquisitive attention, while I read,
Fast bound in chains of silence, which the fair,
Though eloquent themselves, yet fear to break;
What is it, but a map of busy life,
Its fluctuations, and its vast concerns?
Here runs the mountainous and craggy ridge
That tempts Ambition. On the summit, see
The seals of office glitter in his eyes;
He climbs, he pants, he grasps them! At his heels,
Close at his heels, a demagogue ascends,
And with a dexterous jerk soon twists him down,
And wins them, but to lose them in his turn.
Here rills of oily eloquence in soft
Meanders lubricate the course they take;
The modest speaker is ashamed and grieved
To engross a moment's notice, and yet begs,
Begg a propitious ear for his poor thoughts,

However trivial all that he conceives.
 Sweet bashfulness! it claims at least this praise;
 The dearth of information and good sense
 That it foretells us, always comes to pass.
 Cataracts of declamation thunder here,
 There forests of no meaning spread the page,
 In which all comprehension wanders lost;
 While fields of pleasantry amuse us there
 With merry descants on a nation's woes.
 The rest appears a wilderness of strange
 But gay confusion; roses for the cheeks
 And lilies for the brows of faded age,
 Teeth for the toothless, ringlets for the bald,
 Heaven, earth, and ocean, plundered of their sweets,
 Nectareous essences, Olympian dews,
 Sermons, and city feasts, and favourite airs,
 Æthereal journeys, submarine exploits,
 And Katterfelto, with his hair on end
 At his own wonders, wondering for his bread.

(*Lines 1 to 87.*)

From the "Letters"

To the Rev. John Newton.

March 29, 1784.

MY DEAR FRIEND—It being his majesty's pleasure that I should yet have another opportunity to write before he dissolves the parliament, I avail myself of it with all possible alacrity. I thank you for your last, which was not the less welcome for coming, like an extraordinary gazette, at a time when it was not expected.

As when the sea is uncommonly agitated, the water finds its way into creeks and holes of rocks, which in its calmer state it never reaches, in like manner the effect of these turbulent times is felt even at Orchard-side, where in general we live as undisturbed by the political element, as shrimps or cockles that have been accidentally deposited in some hollow beyond the water mark, by the usual dashing of the waves. We were sitting yesterday after dinner, the two ladies and myself, very composedly, and without the least apprehension of any such intrusion in our snug parlour, one lady knitting, the other netting, and the gentleman winding worsted, when to our unspeakable surprise a mob appeared before the window; a smart rap was heard at the door, the boys halloo'd, and the maid announced Mr. Grenville. Puss was unfortunately let out of her box so that the candidate, with all his good friends at his heels, was refused admittance

at the grand entry, and referred to the back door, as the only possible way of approach.

Candidates are creatures not very susceptible of affronts, and would rather, I suppose, climb in at a window, than be absolutely excluded. In a minute, the yard, the kitchen, and the parlour, were filled. Mr. Grenville, advancing toward me, shook me by the hand with a degree of cordiality that was extremely seducing. As soon as he and as many more as could find chairs were seated, he began to open the intent of his visit. I told him I had no vote, for which he readily gave me credit. I assured him I had no influence, which he was not equally inclined to believe, and the less, no doubt, because Mr. Ashburner, the draper, addressing himself to me at this moment, informed me that I had a great deal. Supposing that I could not be possessed of such a treasure without knowing it, I ventured to confirm my first assertion, by saying that if I had any I was utterly at a loss to imagine where it could be, or wherein it consisted. Thus ended the conference. Mr. Grenville squeezed me by the hand again, kissed the ladies, and withdrew. He kissed likewise the maid in the kitchen, and seemed upon the whole a most loving, kissing, kind-hearted gentleman. He is very young, genteel, and handsome. He has a pair of very good eyes in his head, which not being sufficient as it should seem for the many nice and difficult purposes of a senator, he has a third also, which he wore suspended by a riband from his button-hole. The boys halloo'd, the dogs barked, Puss scampered, the hero, with his long train of obsequious followers, withdrew. We made ourselves very merry with the adventure, and in a short time settled into our former tranquillity, never probably to be thus interrupted more. I thought myself, however, happy in being able to affirm truly that I had not that influence for which he sued; and which, had I been possessed of it with my present views on the dispute between the Crown and the Commons, I must have refused him, for he is on the side of the former. It is comfortable to be of no consequence in a world where one cannot exercise any without disobliging somebody. The town, however, seems to be much at his service, and if he be equally successful throughout the country, he will undoubtedly gain his election. Mr. Ashburner perhaps was a little mortified, because it was evident that I owed the honour of this visit to his misrepresentation of my importance. But had he thought proper to assure Mr. Grenville that I had three heads, I should not I suppose have been bound to produce them. . . .

W. C.
M. U.

To Lady Hesketh.

THE LODGE, Nov. 10, 1787.

The parliament, my dearest Cousin, prorogued continually, is a meteor dancing before my eyes, promising me my wish only to disappoint me,

and none but the king and his ministers can tell when you and I shall come together. I hope however that the period, though so often postponed, is not far distant, and that once more I shall behold you, and experience your power to make winter gay and sprightly.

I have a kitten, my dear, the drollest of all creatures that ever wore a cat's skin. Her gambols are not to be described, and would be incredible, if they could. In point of size, she is likely to be a kitten always, being extremely small of her age, but time I suppose, that spoils everything, will make her also a cat. You will see her I hope before that melancholy period shall arrive, for no wisdom that she may gain by experience and reflection hereafter, will compensate the loss of her present hilarity. She is dressed in a tortoise-shell suit, and I know that you will delight in her.

Mrs. Throckmorton carries us to-morrow in her chaise to Chicheley. The event, however, must be supposed to depend on elements, at least on the state of the atmosphere, which is turbulent beyond measure. Yesterday it thundered, last night it lightened, and at three this morning I saw the sky as red as a city in flames could have made it. I have a leech in a bottle that foretells all these prodigies and convulsions of nature: no, not as you will naturally conjecture by articulate utterance of oracular notices, but by a variety of gesticulations, which here I have not room to give an account of. Suffice it to say, that no change of weather surprises him, and that in point of the earliest and most accurate intelligence, he is worth all the barometers in the world. None of them all indeed can make the least pretence to foretell thunder—a species of capacity of which he has given the most unequivocal evidence. I gave but sixpence for him, which is a groat more than the market-price, though he is in fact, or rather would be, if leeches were not found in every ditch, an invaluable acquisition.

W. C.

WILLIAM LISLE BOWLES

(1762 – 1850)

WILLIAM LISLE BOWLES was born at King's Sutton, Northamptonshire, where his father was vicar, on 24th September, 1762. He was educated at Winchester and at Trinity College, Oxford, where he won the Chancellor's prize for Latin verse. He took holy orders, and eventually became vicar of

Bremhill, Wiltshire, Canon of Salisbury, and chaplain to the Prince Regent. He died on 7th April, 1850, at the Close, Salisbury.

When about twenty-five years of age, Bowles was twice crossed in love; one lady thought him too poor, and the other lady died. He consoled himself by travelling

in the north of England, Scotland, and the Continent, and by writing sonnets. His slender volume, *Fourteen Sonnets written chiefly on Picturesque Spots during a Journey*, appeared in 1789, and was a great and instantaneous success. Coleridge and Wordsworth in particular were profoundly influenced by this small volume, which grew slightly in its later editions. Coleridge bought copies to give to his friends, and, when his funds gave out (they were never plentiful), transcribed copies for presentation, a sure sign of the utmost devotion. In one of his copies he wrote that these sonnets had "done his heart more good than all the other books he ever read, excepting his Bible". The sonnets are simple, earnest,

and in good enough taste, but a trifle colourless. Bowles, in fact, is important in literary history not because he is poetic in himself, but because of his influence on greater men. He wrote a large quantity of poetry during the remainder of his long life, but none of it is remembered, though it is graceful and pleasing enough. *The Spirit of Discovery* (1804), *The Missionary of the Andes* (1815), and *St. John in Patmos* (1833) may be mentioned. Bowles's unsympathetic edition of Pope (1806) drew him into a long and somewhat futile controversy with Byron, Campbell, and others; in the course of a good deal of argument some valuable principles of poetic criticism were enunciated by both sides.

Sonnets

At Bamborough Castle

Ye holy Towers that shade the wave-worn steep,
 Long may ye rear your aged brows sublime,
 Though, hurrying silent by, relentless Time
 Assail you, and the winter whirlwind's sweep!
 For far from blazing Grandeur's crowded halls,
 Here Charity hath fix'd her chosen seat,
 Oft list'ning tearful when the wild winds beat
 With hollow bodings round your ancient walls;
 And Pity, at the dark and stormy hour
 Of midnight, when the moon is hid on high,
 Keeps her lone watch upon the topmost tow'r,
 And turns her ear to each expiring cry;
 Blest if her aid some fainting wretch might save,
 And snatch him cold and speechless from the wave.

To the River Tweed

O Tweed! a stranger, that with wandering feet
 O'er hill and dale has journey'd many a mile
 (If so his weary thoughts he might beguile),
 Delighted turns thy beauteous scenes to greet.

The waving branches that romantic bend
O'er thy tall banks, a soothing charm bestow;
The murmurs of thy wand'ring wave below
Seem to his ear the pity of a friend.
Delightful stream! though now along thy shore,
When spring returns in all her wonted pride,
The shepherd's distant pipe is heard no more,
Yet here with pensive peace could I abide,
Far from the stormy world's tumultuous roar,
To muse upon thy banks at eventide.

At Dover Cliffs

(July 20th, 1787)

On these white cliffs, that calm above the flood,
Uplift their shadowing heads, and, at their feet,
Scarce hear the surge that has for ages beat,
Sure many a lonely wanderer has stood;
And, whilst the lifted murmur met his ear,
And o'er the distant billows the still Eve
Sail'd slow, has thought of all his heart must leave
To-morrow; of the friends he loved most dear;
Of social scenes, from which he wept to part:
But if, like me, he knew how fruitless all
The thoughts that would full fain the past recall,
Soon would he quell the risings of his heart,
And brave the wild winds and unhearing tide—
The World his country, and his God his guide.

WILLIAM BLAKE

(1757 – 1827)

WILLIAM BLAKE was born at 28 Broad Street, Golden Square, London, on 28th November, 1757. His father, James O'Neil, was an Irishman who, oddly enough, assumed his stepmother's name of

Blake, went to London, and became a fairly prosperous hosier. Blake's ordinary schooling was but slight; but at the age of ten he was sent to a drawing school, having displayed unusual precocity in art.

He also wrote verses at a very early age. When he was fourteen, he was apprenticed to an engraver, and was for a time employed in drawing the monuments in Westminster Abbey. After completing his apprenticeship, he was for a short time a student in the Royal Academy, and for years supported himself mainly by engraving for the booksellers. To discuss his development or his achievements as an artist is not within the scope of this article, but the art of poetry and the art of design were always closely linked together in his mind. He did not, however, develop his poetical gifts after the age of thirty-seven; his designs improved steadily for many years after that. In 1782 he married Catherine Boucher, who may be bracketed equal with Griselda as the most patient and exemplary of wives, and who proved an invaluable help to him in his work. Next year he published his youthful poems, *Poetical Sketches*, without illustrations. It was printed and published in the ordinary way, but, failing to find a publisher for his next work, *Songs of Innocence*, he invented a process by which he was both printer and illustrator of his own poems. He engraved upon copper both the text of his poems and the surrounding decorative design, and to the pages printed from the plates an appropriate colouring was afterwards added by hand. Thus he wrote, illustrated, printed, tinted, and bound his books himself, with the assistance of his devoted wife. In this way almost all his subsequent work was produced. Blake's third and last volume of poetry was his *Songs of Experience* (1794). He also produced many

books, both in verse and in prose, which are known as "prophetic", and which are a strange and, to the ordinary reader, incomprehensible compound of Swedenborgian thought and Ossianic language. The ordinary reader, if baffled by these books, may be consoled by the reflection that many first-class literary critics of wide experience have been similarly baffled. The Inner Brotherhood of admirers of Blake extracts much satisfaction from these books; exoteric lovers of Blake's poetry see in them the work of an imperfectly sane man who had read Ossian. The names and dates of the principal prophetic books are: *Book of Thel* (1789), *Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (1790), *Book of Urizen* (1794), *Song of Los* (1795), and *Book of Ahania* (1795). The designs in the text of these are magnificent, and atone for the incoherence of the apocalyptic letterpress. Blake also illustrated Young's *Night Thoughts*, Blair's *Grave*, Gray's poems, and *The Book of Job*. His industry as an engraver was tremendous, and lasted throughout his life. He died on 12th August, 1827.

Blake is one of the most isolated figures in English literature. He was not in the slightest degree influenced by his age, nor did he affect his contemporaries to any extent. He lived in a world of his own, peopled with saints and angels. His poems did not become widely popular until the days of the Pre-Raphaelites. The qualities of the poems in his three principal volumes appeal to us more than they did to his contemporaries. He had the genuine gift of song, and some of his songs were written in a kind of ecstasy to airs which he composed himself; they were

really intended to be sung. One of the most charming features of his poems is their innocence, though at times it turns into something akin to what the French term *simplesse*. Blake's touch, even when he is at his best, is unsure; no one whose ear was trustworthy could rhyme "lambs" with "hands" as he does in one of his best-known poems. Those poems which are intended specially for children are delightful; there is not in them

the latent didacticism nor the half-concealed condescension which frequently lurks about verses of this kind. They appear to have been written for a child by a child.

[Arthur Symonds, *William Blake*; A. C. Swinburne, *William Blake: a Critical Essay*; A. Gilchrist, *Life of Blake*; Allardyce Nicoll, *William Blake*; G. L. Keynes, *Bibliography of William Blake*; O. Burdett, *William Blake* (English Men of Letters Series).]

From "Songs of Innocence"

Introduction

Piping down the valleys wild,
Piping songs of pleasant glee,
On a cloud I saw a child,
And he laughing said to me:

"Pipe a song about a Lamb!"
So I piped with merry cheer.
'Piper, pipe that song again;'
So I piped: he wept to hear.

"Drop thy pipe, thy happy pipe:
Sing thy songs of happy cheer!"
So I sang the same again,
While he wept with joy to hear.

"Piper, sit thee down and write
In a book that all may read."
So he vanished from my sight;
And I plucked a hollow reed,

And I made a rural pen,
And I stained the water clear,
And I wrote my happy songs
Every child may joy to hear.

The Lamb

Little Lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee,
Gave thee life, and bade thee feed
By the stream and o'er the mead;
Gave thee clothing of delight,
Softest clothing, woolly, bright;
Gave thee such a tender voice,
Making all the vales rejoice?
Little lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?

Little lamb, I'll tell thee;
Little lamb, I'll tell thee:
He is callèd by thy name,
For He calls Himself a lamb,
He is meek, and He is mild,
He became a little child,
I a child and thou a lamb,
We are callèd by His name.
Little lamb, God bless thee!
Little lamb, God bless thee!

Infant Joy

"I have no name;
I am but two days old."
What shall I call thee?
"I happy am,
Joy is my name."
Sweet joy befall thee!

Pretty joy!
Sweet joy, but two days old.
Sweet joy, I call thee;
Thou dost smile,
I sing the while;
Sweet joy befall thee!

ROBERT BURNS

(1759 – 1796)

ROBERT BURNS was born at Alloway, Ayrshire, on 25th January, 1759. His father, William Burnes (so he was in the habit of spelling his name), was a nursery-gardener of strong character and unusual mental ability. Burns's education was discontinuous but by no means slight; he attended a school at Alloway Mill; he was taught by one John Murdoch; he received instruction from his father. The most valuable elements in his education, however, were those which he acquired for himself; he had an enthusiasm which is as often stifled as fostered in ancient seats of learning. Burns made himself acquainted at a fairly early age with some of the writers of Queen Anne's time, especially Addison and Pope; with the novels of his fellow-countryman Smollett, and with the poems of his nearest predecessors in the art of vernacular song-writing, Ramsay and Ferguson. Meanwhile, William Burnes had abandoned gardening for farming; in 1766 he took a small farm at Mount Oliphant, and in 1777 took a farm of 130 acres at Lochlea, Tarbolton. Burns, being the eldest son, was his father's chief assistant from 1774 onwards. He studied surveying for a time, and went to Irvine to learn the flax-dressing business, but returned to continue his farming. His absences from home widened his outlook on life; he met with smugglers and other odd characters; he fell in love, or imagined that he fell in love, several times; and he began to write poetry. His reading now

included Sterne, Thomson, Shenstone, "Ossian", and Mackenzie; it throws some light on the sentimental side of his character to know that he wore out with constant use two copies of the lachrymose *Man of Feeling*. His convivial gifts were exercised at a Bachelors' Club and a masonic lodge at Tarbolton. In 1784 the elder Burns died, and, though he left his affairs in confusion, Burns and his brother Gilbert managed to take a farm of 118 acres at Mossgiel, near Mauchline. While there Burns wrote many of his best poems, and acquired considerable local fame, as well as some local notoriety among supporters of the "Auld Licht" tenets. The farm, however, was not prospering, and he decided to emigrate to the West Indies, having been promised the post of overseer on an estate in Jamaica. To defray the cost of his passage he published a collection of his poems, which was printed in 1786 at Kilmarnock. He at once became famous; the Kilmarnock edition only brought him in £20 in cash, but it was a passport to the best society in Edinburgh. He abandoned his Jamaican enterprise, and deciding to reissue his poems in Edinburgh, went thither in November, 1786. His fame had preceded him, and he was entertained and fêted by the literary leaders and by some of the nobility and gentry of the city. His head was not turned by his reception; he had too much common sense to fail to realize that he was merely something in the nature



ROBERT BURNS

From the engraving by William Holl after the portrait by Archibald Skirving

of a nine days' wonder. His membership of a masonic lodge, however, and of a convivial club called the Crochallan Fencibles, did much to confirm him in his abuse of stimulants. Henry Mackenzie praised him in *The Lounger* (9th December, 1786); the second edition of his poems appeared in the following April. It eventually put about £500 in his pocket, but the publisher was not prompt with his payments, and Burns hung about Edinburgh for some time, losing some of his habits of industry. He varied the monotony of waiting by going several tours in the Lowlands and Highlands. In 1788 he took a considerable farm (Ellisland) near Dumfries, and married Jean Armour, a Mauchline girl to whom he had given a written acknowledgment of marriage two years previously, and who had borne him two pairs of twins. The Ellisland farm was no more successful than his previous ventures, so he turned it into a dairy-farm, to be worked chiefly by his wife, and took up an appointment in the excise. In 1791 he gave up his farm, moved to Dumfries, and relied for a livelihood upon his employment as an exciseman alone. He sympathized keenly with the French revolutionaries, and in 1792 nearly forfeited his post because he sent them four carronades, taken from a captured smuggler. His views gradually became less fervent, or were less fervently expressed, and in 1795 he joined the volunteers. During the last years of his life he wrote many beautiful songs, adapted to old Scottish tunes; some for a collection published by James Johnson (*The Musical Museum*) and others for a

collection undertaken by George Thomson. These songs were all labours of love; Burns never received any payment for them, and looked upon the composition of them as his gift to the nation; as indeed it was. In many of these songs Burns worked over old material, borrowing a phrase, an idea, a refrain, or sometimes more from old traditional songs, often of doubtful decency. His touch, like that of Shakespeare, was magical; he could transform the basest metal into gold by means of the slightest alterations. Burns is at his happiest in some of these songs, and shows himself not only an inspired poet but a craftsman of superlative skill. His health now began to break up, and he died of the effects of rheumatic fever on 21st July, 1796.

To appreciate Burns to the full it is necessary to have been born north of the Tweed. This is not merely due to the occasional difficulties of his vocabulary, though frequent consultation of a glossary is apt to rob the best poetry of its finest flavour. It is due to the fact that the impalpable spirit of Burns is so national that it cannot be understood save by his fellow-countrymen. It is not easy for one who is not to the manner born to write a criticism of him, especially as, in the eyes of some of his admirers, to state that he was anything less than perfection as a man and as a poet is a crime akin to "speaking disrespectfully of the Equator". Burns has suffered from the injudicious praise of his admirers and from the undeserved recriminations of his detractors, many of whom have posed as admirers. His ecclesiastical enemies

and their successors, unable to deny the greatness of his poetry, have turned their attention to his life, where it was only too easy to find many grounds for reproof. The two rhyming accomplishments of Dionysus, mentioned by his slave Xanthias in line 740 of *The Frogs*—wine and women—were Burns's undoing. His drinking habits were those of his day, and call for no remark, though it is probable that, like Cassio, he had "very poor and unhappy brains for drinking". His amours were as numerous as those of Jupiter, of whom the inimitable Lemprière says: "He introduced himself to Danaë in a shower of gold, he corrupted Antiope in the form of a Satyr, and Leda in the form of a swan. He became a bull to seduce Europa, and he enjoyed the company of Ægina in the form of a flame of fire. He assumed the habit of Diana to corrupt Callisto, and became Amphitryon to gain the affections of Alcmena." Many biographers of Burns, both of the defensive and the offensive variety, have painfully gathered details about these affairs, which might well have been left in oblivion. It is almost certain that Burns's life was both less vicious and less unhappy than it has been made out to have been. He was often foolish and misguided, but was totally free from all cold vices such as meanness or duplicity. He was a fearlessly proud man, and was honest and independent almost to a fault. It may seem foolish to say that Burns's greatest gift was his gift of song. It is not so foolish as it seems, because his poems have sometimes been valued for the system of civil and ecclesiastical politics which

can be extracted from some of them. He is one of the greatest lyric poets of the world, and in several other respects resembles Catullus. When Catullus imitated Callimachus and the Alexandrians, and when Burns reclined on the bosom of Gray and Shenstone, they did not either of them produce anything that was memorable. But Catullus's spontaneous hendecasyllables and Burns's Doric songs and poems spring straight from the heart, and therefore go straight to the hearts of those who hear them. Catullus's poem on the death of Lesbia's sparrow and Burns's *To a Field-Mouse* have much in common. Both poets in touching the little get in touch with the permanent and universal. While Burns can hardly be called a better lyric poet than Catullus (for what can be better than perfection?), he has a wider range. His poems range from the most rousing of war-songs to the most pathetic of laments (*To Mary in Heaven*), and he has complete mastery over every tone and semitone of humour and pathos. It is impossible to mention the names of even a tithe of his best poems. *Tam o' Shanter* is the most famous of his narrative poems; *The Jolly Beggars*, a cantata, is even more remarkable as a work of the highest art and the greatest ease; *The Two Dogs* is a happily-conceived comparison between the rich and the poor. Other favourites are: *The Cottar's Saturday Night* (not so Scottish and not so inspired as most of the other favourites); *The Holy Fair*, a biting satire; *Hallowe'en*; and that masterpiece of whimsical drollery, the *Address to the Deil*. Even more popular, in the strict sense of that

word, are Burns's songs. His poems and songs have become part of Scotland; it is hardly too much to say that they *are* Scotland. Every phase of Scottish life is mirrored in them; and he is the national poet of his country in an even more intimate sense than Homer is the national poet of Greece. Every Scot, even if he disapproves of the Act of 1707, feels that he need not greatly care who should make the laws of his

nation, since Robert Burns has, once and for all, made his nation's songs.

[J. G. Lockhart, *Life of Burns*; J. C. Shairp, *Burns* (in English Men of Letters Series); T. F. Henderson, *Robert Burns*; Sir W. A. Craigie, *Primer of Burns*; A. Angellier, *Robert Burns: la vie et les œuvres*; R. L. Stevenson, *Familiar Studies of Men and Books*; Catherine Carswell, *The Life of Robert Burns*.]

Ay Waukin, O

Chorus

Ay waukin, O,
Waukin still and weary:
Sleep I can get nane
For thinkin on my dearie.

I

Simmer's a pleasant time:
Flowers of every colour,
The water rins owre the heugh,
And I long for my true lover.

II

When I sleep I dream,
When I wauk I'm eerie,
Sleep I can get nane,
For thinkin on my dearie.

III

Lanely night comes on,
A' the lave are sleepin,
I think on my bonie lad,
And I bleer my een wi' greetin.

Chorus

Ay waukin, O,
Waukin still and weary:
Sleep I can get nane
For thinkin on my dearie.

John Anderson My Jo

I

John Anderson my jo, John,
 When we were first acquent,
 Your locks were like the raven,
 Your bonie brow was brent;
 But now your brow is beld, John,
 Your locks are like the snaw,
 But blessings on your frosty pow,
 John Anderson my jo!

II

John Anderson my jo, John,
 We clamb the hill thegither,
 And monie a cantie day, John,
 We've had wi' ane anither;
 Now we maun totter down, John,
 And hand in hand we'll go,
 And sleep thegither at the foot,
 John Anderson my jo!

Willie Brew'd a Peck o' Maut

Chorus

We are na fou, we're nae that fou,
 But just a drappie in our e'e!
 The cock may crawl, the day may daw,
 And ay we'll taste the barley-bree!

I

O, Willie brew'd a peck o' maut,
 And Rob and Allan cam to see.
 Three blyther hearts that lee-lang night
 Ye wad na found in Christendie.

II

Here are we met three merry boys,
 Three merry boys I trow are we;
 And monie a night we've merry been,
 And monie mae we hope to be!

III

It is the moon, I ken her horn,
That's blinkin in the lift sae hie:
She shines sae bright to wyle us hame,
But, by my sooth, she'll wait a wee!

IV

Wha first shall rise to gang awa,
A cuckold, coward loun is he!
Wha first beside his chair shall fa',
He is the King amang us three!

Chorus

We are na fou, we're nae that fou,
But just a drappie in our e'e!
The cock may crawl, the day may daw,
And ay we'll taste the barley-bree!

Mary Morison

I

O Mary, at thy window be!
It is the wish'd, the trysted hour.
Those smiles and glances let me see,
That make the miser's treasure poor.
How blythely wad I bide the stoure,
A weary slave frae sun to sun,
Could I the rich reward secure—
The lovely Mary Morison!

II

Yestreen, when to the trembling string
The dance gaed thro' the lighted ha',
To thee my fancy took its wing,
I sat, but neither heard or saw:
Tho' this was fair, and that was braw,
And yon the toast of a' the town,
I sigh'd and said amang them a':—
Ye are na Mary Morison!

III

O Mary, canst thou wreck his peace
 Wha for thy sake wad gladly die?
 Or canst thou break that heart of his
 Whase only faut is loving thee?
 If love for love thou wilt na gie,
 At least be pity to me shown:
 A thought ungente canna be
 The thought o' Mary Morison.

O, Wert Thou in the Cauld Blast

I

O, wert thou in the cauld blast
 On yonder lea, on yonder lea,
 My plaidie to the angry airt,
 I'd shelter thee, I'd shelter thee.
 Or did Misfortune's bitter storms
 Around thee blaw, around thee blaw,
 Thy bield should be my bosom,
 To share it a', to share it a'.

II

Or were I in the wildest waste,
 Sae black and bare, sae black and bare,
 The desert were a Paradise,
 If thou wert there, if thou wert there.
 Or were I monarch of the globe,
 Wi' thee to reign, wi' thee to reign,
 The brightest jewel in my crown
 Wad be my queen, wad be my queen.

To a Mouse

(On turning her up in her nest with the plough, Nov., 1785)

I

Wee, sleekit, cowrin, tim'rous beastie,
 O, what a panic's in thy breastie!
 Thou need na start awa sae hasty
 Wi' bickering brattle!

I wad be laith to rin an' chase thee,
Wi' murdering pattle!

II

I'm truly sorry man's dominion
Has broken Nature's social union,
An' justifies that ill opinion
Which makes thee startle
At me, thy poor, earth-born companion
An' fellow mortal!

III

I doubt na, whyles, but thou may thieve;
What then? poor beastie, thou maun live.
A daimen icker in a thrave
'S a sma' request;
I'll get a blessin wi' the lave,
An' never miss't!

IV

Thy wee-bit housie, too, in ruin!
Its silly wa's the win's are strewin!
An' naething, now, to big a new ane,
O' foggage green!
An' bleak December's win's ensuin,
Baith snell an' keen!

V

Thou saw the fields laid bare an' waste,
An' weary winter comin fast,
An' cozie here, beneath the blast,
Thou thought to dwell,
Till crash! the cruel coulter past
Out thro' thy cell.

VI

That wee bit heap o' leaves an' stibble,
Hast cost thee monie a weary nibble!
Now thou's turned out, for a' thy trouble,
But house or hald,
To thole the winter's sleety dribble,
An' cranreuch cauld!

ROBERT BURNS

VII

But Mousie, thou art no thy lane,
 In proving foresight may be vain:
 The best-laid schemes o' mice an' men
 Gang aft agley,
 An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain,
 For promis'd joy!

VIII

Still thou art blest, compared wi' me!
 The present only toucheth thee:
 But och! I backward cast my e'e,
 On prospects drear!
 An' forward, tho' I canna see,
 I guess an' fear!

Address to the Deil

O Prince! O Chief of many thronèd pow'rs!
 That led th' embattl'd seraphim to war.

(Milton.)

I

O Thou! whatever title suit thee—
 Auld Hornie, Satan, Nick, or Clootie—
 Wha in yon cavern grim an' sootie,
 Clos'd under hatches,
 Spairges about the brunstane cootie,
 To scaud poor wretches!

II

Hear me, Auld Hangie, for a wee,
 An' let poor damnèd bodies be;
 I'm sure sma' pleasure it can gie
 Ev'n to a deil,
 To skelp an' scaud poor dogs like me
 An' hear us squeel.

III

Great is thy pow'r an' great thy fame;
 Far kend an' noted is thy name;
 An' tho' yon lowin heugh's thy hame,
 Thou travels far;

An' faith! thou's neither lag, nor lame,
Nor blate, nor scaur.

IV

Whyles, ranging like a roarin lion,
For prey, a' holes an' corners trying;
Whyles, on the strong-wing'd tempest flyin,
Tirlin the kirks;
Whyles, in the human bosom pryin,
Unseen thou lurks.

V

I've heard my rev'rend graunie say,
In lanely glens ye like to stray;
Or, where auld ruin'd castles grey
Nod to the moon,
Ye fright the nightly wand'rer's way
Wi' eldritch croon.

VI

When twilight did my graunie summon,
To say her pray'rs, douce, honest woman!
Aft yont the dyke she's heard you bummin,
Wi' eerie drone;
Or, rustlin, thro' the boortrees comin,
Wi' heavy groan.

VII

Ae dreary, windy, winter night,
The stars shot down wi' sklentint light,
Wi' you mysel, I gat a fright:
Ayont the lough,
Ye, like a rash-buss, stood in sight,
Wi' waving sugh.

VIII

The cudgel in my nieve did shake,
Each bristl'd hair stood like a stake;
When wi' an eldritch, stoor "quaick, quaick",
Amang the springs,
Awa ye squatter'd like a drake,
On whistling wings.

ROBERT BURNS

IX

Let warlocks grim, an' wither'd hags,
Tell how wi' you, on ragweed nags,
They skim the muirs an' dizzy crags,
 Wi' wicked speed;
And in kirk-yards renew their leagues,
 Owre howkit dead.

X

Thence, countra wives, wi' toil an' pain,
May plunge an' plunge the kirk in vain;
For O! the yellow treasure's taen
 By witching skill;
An' dawtit, twal-pint hawkie's gaen
 As yell's the bill.

XI

Thence, mystic knots mak great abuse
On young guidmen, fond, keen an' croose;
When the best wark-lume i' the house,
 By cantraip wit,
Is instant made no worth a louse,
 Just at the bit.

XII

When throwes dissolve the snawy hoord,
An' float the jinglin icy boord,
Then, water-kelpies haunt the foord,
 By your direction,
An' nighted trav'lers are allur'd
 To their destruction.

XIII

And aft your moss-traversing spunkies,
Decoy the wight that late an' drunk is:
The bleezin, curst, mischievous monkies
 Delude his eyes,
Till in some miry slough he sunk is,
 Ne'er mair to rise.

XIV

When Masons' mystic word an' grip
In storms an' tempests raise you up,

Some cock or cat your rage maun stop,
 Or, strange to tell!
 The youngest brother ye wad whip
 Aff straught to hell.

XV

Lang syne in Eden's bonie yard,
 When youthfu' lovers first were pair'd,
 An' all the soul of love they shar'd,
 The raptur'd hour,
 Sweet on the fragrant flow'ry swaird,
 In shady bow'r:

XVI

Then you, ye auld, snick-drawing dog!
 Ye cam to Paradise incog,
 An' play'd on man a cursed brogue
 (Black be your fa'!),
 An' gied the infant warld a shog,
 'Maist ruin'd a'.

XVII

D' ye mind that day when in a bizz
 Wi' reekit duds, an' reestit gizz,
 Ye did present your smoutie phiz,
 'Mang better folk;
 An' sklent on the man of Uzz
 Your spitefu' joke?

XVIII

An' how ye gat him i' your thrall,
 An' brak him out o' house an' hal',
 While scabs an' botches did him gall,
 Wi' bitter claw;
 An' lows'd his ill-tongu'd wicked scaul—
 Was warst ava?

XIX

But a' your doings to rehearse,
 Your wily snares an' fechtin fierce,
 Sin' that day Michael did you pierce
 Down to this time,
 Wad ding a Lallan tongue, or Erse,
 In prose or rhyme.

XX

An' now, Auld Cloots, I ken ye're thinkin,
A certain Bardie's rantin, drinkin,
Some luckless hour will send him linkin,
 To your black Pit;
But, faith! he'll turn a corner jinkin,
 An' cheat you yet.

XXI

But fare-you-weel, Auld Nickie-Ben!
O, wad ye tak a thought an' men'!
Ye aiblins might—I dinna ken—
 Still hae a stake:
I'm wae to think upo' yon den,
 Ev'n for your sake!

John Barleycorn

A Ballad

I

There was three kings into the east,
 Three kings both great and high,
And they hae sworn a solemn oath
 John Barleycorn should die.

II

They took a plough and plough'd him down,
 Put clods upon his head,
And they hae sworn a solemn oath
 John Barleycorn was dead.

III

But the cheerful Spring came kindly on,
 And show'rs began to fall;
John Barleycorn got up again,
 And sore surpris'd them all.

IV

The sultry suns of Summer came,
And he grew thick and strong:
His head weel arm'd wi' pointed spears,
That no one should him wrong.

V

The sober Autumn enter'd mild,
When he grew wan and pale;
His bending joints and drooping head
Show'd he began to fail.

VI

His colour sicken'd more and more,
He faded into age;
And then his enemies began
To show their deadly rage.

VII

They've taen a weapon long and sharp,
And cut him by the knee;
Then ty'd him fast upon a cart,
Like a rogue for forgerie.

VIII

They laid him down upon his back,
And cudgell'd him full sore.
They hung him up before the storm,
And turn'd him o'er and o'er.

IX

They fill'd up a darksome pit
With water to the brim,
They heav'd in John Barleycorn—
There, let him sink or swim!

X

They laid him out upon the floor,
To work him farther woe;
And still, as signs of life appear'd,
They tossed him to and fro.

ROBERT BURNS

XI

They wasted o'er a scorching flame
 The marrow of his bones;
 But a miller us'd him worst of all,
 For he crush'd him between two stones.

XII

And they hae taen his very heart's blood,
 And drank it round and round;
 And still the more and more they drank,
 Their joy did more abound.

XIII

John Barleycorn was a hero bold,
 Of noble enterprise;
 For if you do but taste his blood,
 'Twill make your courage rise.

XIV

'Twill make a man forget his woe;
 'Twill heighten all his joy:
 'Twill make the widow's heart to sing,
 Tho' the tear were in her eye.

XV

Then let us toast John Barleycorn,
 Each man a glass in hand;
 And may his great posterity
 Ne'er fail in old Scotland!

WILLIAM BECKFORD

(1759 - 1844)

WILLIAM BECKFORD was born at Fonthill, Wiltshire, on 29th September, 1759. His father, who bore the same name, was twice Lord Mayor of London, and won some

fame by the forcible speech which he made to George III in 1770. A few weeks later he died, and left his eleven-year-old son the fabulous fortune of £1,000,000 in cash and

an income of £100,000 a year. Young Beckford was educated privately, at home and at Geneva, and subsequently travelled much, living for some time in Portugal. He expended an enormous sum in building and rebuilding "a stately pleasure-dome", Fonthill Abbey, near Salisbury, which he filled with rare and expensive works of art. Here he lived in seclusion for twenty years. In 1822 the Abbey and the greater part of its contents were sold, and he retired to Bath, where, with a much diminished fortune, but one amply sufficient, he lived until his death, which took place on 2nd May, 1844. He amused himself by constructing a bijou pleasure-dome at Bath.

Beckford was famous for his vast fortune, his eccentricities, his seclusion, his architectural aberrations, and his collections of curios.

His literary fame rests upon his Eastern tale, *The History of the Caliph Vathek*, which he wrote in French in three days and two nights at the age of twenty-two. A surreptitious English translation by the Rev. Samuel Henley appeared in 1786; the French original was published in the following year. *Vathek* is a powerfully written Oriental novelette, as eccentric as its author; it had neither predecessor nor successor, but may be regarded as a kind of Eastern cousin of the "Tale of Terror". The description of the hall of Eblis at the end of the book is admirably written. Beckford's other writings, now forgotten, included a humorous *History of Extraordinary Painters*, an excellent book of travels, and two skits on the sentimental novel.

[Lewis Melville, *The Life and Letters of William Beckford of Fonthill*.]

From "Vathek"

The caliph and Nouronihar beheld each other with amazement at finding themselves in a place which, though roofed with a vaulted ceiling, was so spacious and lofty, that at first they took it for an immeasurable plain. But their eyes at length growing familiar to the grandeur of the surrounding objects, they extended their view to those at a distance, and discovered rows of columns and arcades, which gradually diminished, till they terminated in a point radiant as the sun when he darts his last beams athwart the ocean. The pavement, strewed over with gold dust and saffron, exhaled so subtile an odour as almost overpowered them. They, however, went on, and observed an infinity of censers, in which ambergris and the wood of aloes were continually burning. Between the several columns were placed tables, each spread with a profusion of viands, and wines of every species sparkling in vases of crystal. A throng of genii, and other fantastic spirits, of either sex, danced lasciviously at the sound of music which issued from beneath.

In the midst of this immense hall, a vast multitude was incessantly passing, who severally kept their right hands on their hearts, without

once regarding any thing around them: they had all the livid paleness of death. Their eyes, deep sunk in their sockets, resembled those phosphoric meteors that glimmer by night in places of interment. Some stalked slowly on, absorbed in profound reverie; some, shrieking with agony, ran furiously about like tigers wounded with poisoned arrows; whilst others, grinding their teeth in rage, foamed along more frantic than the wildest maniac. They all avoided each other; and, though surrounded by a multitude that no one could number, each wandered at random unheeding of the rest, as if alone on a desert where no foot had trodden.

Vathek and Nouronihar, frozen with terror at a sight so baleful, demanded of the Giaour what these appearances might mean, and why these ambulating spectres never withdrew their hands from their hearts? "Perplex not yourselves with so much at once," replied he bluntly; "you will soon be acquainted with all: let us haste, and present you to Eblis." They continued their way through the multitude: but, notwithstanding their confidence at first they were not sufficiently composed to examine with attention the various prospective of halls and of galleries that opened on the right hand and left; which were all illuminated by torches and braziers, whose flames rose in pyramids to the centre of the vault. At length they came to a place, where long curtains, brocaded with crimson and gold, fell from all parts in solemn confusion. Here the choirs and dances were heard no longer. The light which glimmered came from afar.

After some time, Vathek and Nouronihar perceived a gleam brightening through the drapery, and entered a vast tabernacle hung round with the skins of leopards. An infinity of elders with streaming beards, and afrits in complete armour, had prostrated themselves before the ascent of a lofty eminence; on the top of which, upon a globe of fire, sat the formidable Eblis. His person was that of a young man, whose noble and regular features seemed to have been tarnished by malignant vapours. In his large eyes appeared both pride and despair; his flowing hair retained some resemblance to that of an angel of light. In his hand, which thunder had blasted, he swayed the iron sceptre, that causes the monster Ouranbad, the afrits, and all the powers of the abyss to tremble. At his presence, the heart of the caliph sunk within him; and he fell prostrate on his face. Nouronihar, however, though greatly dismayed, could not help admiring the person of Eblis; for she expected to have seen some stupendous giant. Eblis, with a voice more mild than might be imagined, but such as penetrated the soul and filled it with the deepest melancholy, said, "Creatures of clay, I receive you into mine empire: ye are numbered amongst my adorers: enjoy whatever this palace affords: the treasures of the pre-adamite sultans: their fulminating sabres; and those talismans, that compel the dives to open the subterranean expanses of the mountain of Kaf, which communicate with these. There, insatiable as your curiosity

may be, shall you find sufficient objects to gratify it. You shall possess the exclusive privilege of entering the fortresses of Ahernan, and the halls of Argenk, where are portrayed all creatures endowed with intelligence; and the various animals that inhabited the earth prior to the creation of that contemptible being whom ye denominate the father of mankind."

JAMES BOSWELL

(1740 - 1795)

JAMES BOSWELL was born in Edinburgh on 29th October, 1740. His father, a well-known advocate, was appointed a lord of session in 1754, taking the title of Lord Auchinleck, from his estate in Ayrshire. Boswell was educated at Edinburgh High School and at the Universities of Edinburgh and Glasgow. He was afflicted with the strange ambition of becoming a Roman Catholic priest; he was fired with the desire of obtaining a commission in the Guards; but he finally consented to follow his father's profession of law. He never attained any great success in his legal career, and a visit to London in 1760 unsettled him and caused him permanently to prefer the English to the Scottish capital, and never to lose a chance of visiting it. He settled down, however, as much as his nature permitted him, to read for the Scottish Bar, diversifying his studies by writing verse and prose of would-be sprightliness, and by cultivating the society of the most eminent men in Edinburgh. The 16th of May, 1763, was a red-letter day in his life, for then, during another London visit, he was introduced to Dr. Johnson, in the back-parlour of Tom Davies,

the actor and bookseller. The somewhat incongruous pair, aged respectively twenty-two and fifty-three, almost at once became firm friends, Boswell countering the attacks of the Great Bear by a policy of turning the left cheek. During the twenty-one years which remained of Johnson's life, they met on about two hundred and seventy days. Later in 1763 Boswell went to complete his legal studies at Utrecht, from whence he went on to Geneva, visited Voltaire and Rousseau, and proceeded to Italy. He next visited Corsica, where he sat at the feet of Paoli, the insurgent leader. In 1766 he was called to the Scottish Bar. In 1768 he published *An Account of Corsica, The Journal of a Tour to that Island, and Memoirs of Pascal Paoli*, which won him some reputation as a writer. The historical part of this book is commonplace, but the *Journal* is vivacious and attractive. Boswell was inordinately delighted with his success, and, somewhat characteristically, called on Chatham in Corsican attire, which he also wore at a Shakespeare festival at Stratford in 1769. Matrimonial schemes now absorbed much of his attention, and after considering the claims

of various possible candidates—Italian, Dutch, English, Irish, and Scottish—for the honour of his hand, he married his cousin, Margaret Montgomerie, on 25th November, 1769. In the autumn of 1773 he visited the Hebrides with Johnson; earlier in that year he was, with difficulty, elected a member of The Club. In 1782 his father's death made him laird of Auchinleck, and put him in possession of an income of £1600 a year. He did not, however, manage his affairs prudently, and was often in pecuniary difficulties. Johnson's death in 1784 made him feel at liberty to publish his *Journal of the Tour to the Hebrides* (1786) and to settle down to the composition of his greater work. He was called to the English Bar in 1786, and for a short time held the post of Recorder of Carlisle. His last years were embittered by the death of his wife, whom he sincerely loved, by hypochondria, and by financial embarrassments, but were sweetened by the success of his *Life of Samuel Johnson*, which appeared, after some delays, in May, 1791. He saw a second edition through the press, but before he had completed his work on a third edition, he died (19th May, 1795).

Boswell's *Life of Johnson* is, by universal consent, the best biography in the English language. Its general scheme was modelled upon Mason's *Life of Gray*, but thanks to his consummate biographical ability, Boswell has completely out-classed his model. He hunted Ursa Major with all the cunning of an old *shikaree*, dis-

regarding the comment of his father that "Jamie was gone clean gyte", and had pinned himself to the tail of "an auld dominie that keepit a schule and ca'd it an academy". He also disregarded Johnson's well-known objection—"Sir, you appear to have only two subjects, yourself and me, and I am sick of both". Some critics have maintained that Boswell's transcendent merit as a biographer was due to his having been a fool. Such a theory is quite untenable. He had many foolish qualities; but the merits of his book are artistic, not photographic or phonographic merits. He was as completely master of his material as was Gibbon, and was equally unsparing of himself in the trouble which he took to handle it to the best of his ability. He revealed himself in his book as unsparingly as Pepys revealed himself in his *Diary*, but printed and published his revelations while Pepys locked his away in cipher. He is, therefore, a man whom it is easy to love, but difficult to respect. His book has conferred upon Johnson an immortality which *Irene*, *Rasselas*, and even *The Lives of the Poets* would never have won; and, thanks to Boswell, Johnson "in his habit as he liv'd" is better known to us than many of our contemporaries, whose biographies have been written by less able hands.

[P. Fitzgerald, *Life of James Boswell*; W. Keith Leask, *James Boswell* (Famous Scots Series); G. Mallory, *Boswell the Biographer*; C. B. Tinker, *Young Boswell*.]



JAMES BOSWELL

From the drawing by G. Dance in the National Portrait Gallery

From the "Life of Johnson"

At last, on Monday the 16th of May (1763), when I was sitting in Mr. Davies's back-parlour, after having drunk tea with him and Mrs. Davies, Johnson unexpectedly came into the shop; and Mr. Davies having perceived him through the glass-door in the room in which we were sitting, advancing towards us,—he announced his awful approach to me, somewhat in the manner of an actor in the part of Horatio, when he addressed Hamlet on the appearance of his father's ghost, "Look, my Lord, it comes." I found that I had a very perfect idea of Johnson's figure, from the portrait of him painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds soon after he had published his Dictionary, in the attitude of sitting in his easy chair in deep meditation; which was the first picture his friend did for him, which Sir Joshua very kindly presented to me, and from which an engraving has been made for this work. Mr. Davies mentioned my name, and respectfully introduced me to him. I was much agitated; and recollecting his prejudice against the Scotch, of which I had heard much, I said to Davies, "Don't tell where I come from."—"From Scotland," cried Davies, roguishly. "Mr. Johnson, (said I) I do indeed come from Scotland, but I cannot help it." I am willing to flatter myself that I meant this as light pleasantry to soothe and conciliate him, and not as an humiliating abasement at the expense of my country. But however that might be, this speech was somewhat unlucky; for with that quickness of wit for which he was so remarkable, he seized the expression, "come from Scotland", which I used in the sense of being of that country; and, as if I had said that I had come away from it, or left it, retorted, "That, Sir, I find, is what a very great many of your countrymen cannot help." This stroke stunned me a good deal; and when we had sat down, I felt myself not a little embarrassed, and apprehensive of what might come next. He then addressed himself to Davies: "What do you think of Garrick? He has refused me an order for the play for Miss Williams, because he knows the house will be full, and that an order would be worth three shillings." Eager to take any opening to get into conversation with him, I ventured to say, "O, Sir, I cannot think Mr. Garrick would grudge such a trifle to you." "Sir, (said he, with a stern look), I have known David Garrick longer than you have done: and I know no right you have to talk to me on the subject." Perhaps I deserved this check; for it was rather presumptuous in me, an entire stranger, to express any doubt of the justice of his animadversion upon his old acquaintance and pupil. I now felt myself much mortified, and began to think, that the hope which I had long indulged of obtaining his acquaintance was blasted. And, in truth, had not my ardour been uncommonly strong, and my resolution uncommonly persevering, so rough a reception might have deterred me for ever from making any further

attempts. Fortunately, however, I remained upon the field not wholly discomfited; and was soon rewarded by hearing some of his conversation, of which I preserved the following short minute, without marking the questions and observations by which it was produced.

"People (he remarked) may be taken in once, who imagine that an author is greater in private life than other men. Uncommon parts require uncommon opportunities for their exertion.

"In barbarous society, superiority of parts is of real consequence. Great strength or great wisdom is of much value to an individual. But in more polished times there are people to do every thing for money; and then there are a number of other superiorities, such as those of birth and fortune, and rank, that dissipate men's attention, and leave no extraordinary share of respect for personal and intellectual superiority. This is wisely ordered by Providence, to preserve some equality among mankind."

"Sir, this book ('The Elements of Criticism', which he had taken up,) is a pretty essay, and deserves to be held in some estimation, though much of it is chimerical."

Speaking of one who with more than ordinary boldness attacked public measures and the royal family, he said, "I think he is safe from the law, but he is an abusive scoundrel; and instead of applying to my Lord Chief Justice to punish him, I would send half a dozen footmen and have him well ducked."

"The notion of liberty amuses the people of England, and helps to keep off the *tedium vitae*. When a butcher tells you that *his heart bleeds for his country*, he has, in fact, no uneasy feeling."

"Sheridan will not succeed in Bath with his oratory. Ridicule has gone down before him, and I doubt, Derrick is his enemy."

"Derrick may do very well, as long as he can outrun his character; but the moment his character gets up with him, it is all over."

It is, however, but just to record, that some years afterwards, when I reminded him of this sarcasm, he said, "Well, but Derrick has now got a character that he need not run away from."

I was highly pleased with the extraordinary vigour of his conversation, and regretted that I was drawn away from it by an engagement at another place. I had, for a part of the evening, been left alone with him, and had ventured to make an observation now and then, which he received very civilly; so that I was satisfied that though there was a roughness in his manner, there was no ill-nature in his disposition. Davies followed me to the door, and when I complained to him a little of the hard blows which the great man had given me, he kindly took upon him to console me by saying, "Don't be uneasy. I can see he likes you very well."

From the "Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides"

(Wednesday, 1st September, 1773)

We rode on well, till we came to the high mountain called the Rattakin, by which time both Dr. Johnson and the horses were a good deal fatigued. It is a terrible steep to climb, notwithstanding the road is formed slanting along it; however, we made it out. On the top of it we met Captain Macleod of Balmenoch (a Dutch officer who had come from Sky) riding with his sword slung across him. He asked, "Is this Mr. Boswell?" which was a proof that we were expected. Going down the hill on the other side was no easy task. As Dr. Johnson was a great weight, the two guides agreed that he should ride the horses alternately. Hay's were the two best, and the Doctor would not ride but upon one or other of them, a black or a brown. But, as Hay complained much after ascending the Rattakin, the Doctor was prevailed with to mount one of Vass's greys. As he rode upon it down hill, it did not go well; and he grumbled. I walked on a little before, but was excessively entertained with the method taken to keep him in good humour. Hay led the horse's head, talking to Dr. Johnson, as much as he could; and (having heard him, in the afternoon express a pastoral pleasure on seeing the goats browsing) just when the Doctor was uttering his displeasure, the fellow cried, with a very Highland accent, "See such pretty goats!" Then he whistled, *whu!* and made them jump—Little did he conceive what Doctor Johnson was. Here now was a common ignorant Highland clown imagining that he could divert, as one does a child,—Dr. Samuel Johnson!—The ludicrousness, absurdity, and extraordinary contrast between what the fellow fancied, and the reality, was truly comick.

It grew dusky; and we had a very tedious ride for what was called five miles; but I am sure would measure ten. We had no conversation. I was riding forward to the inn at Glenelg, on the shore opposite to Sky, that I might take proper measures, before Dr. Johnson, who was now advancing in dreary silence, Hay leading his horse, should arrive. Vass also walked by the side of his horse, and Joseph followed behind: as therefore he was thus attended, and seemed to be in deep meditation, I thought there could be no harm in leaving him for a little while. He called me back with a tremendous shout, and was really in a passion with me for leaving him. I told him my intentions, but he was not satisfied, and said, "Do you know, I should as soon have thought of picking a pocket, as doing so."—BOSWELL. "I am diverted with you, sir."—JOHNSON. "Sir, I could never be diverted with incivility. Doing such a thing, makes one lose confidence in him who has done it, as one cannot tell what he may do next."—His extraordinary warmth confounded me so much, that I

justified myself but lamely to him; yet my intentions were not improper. I wished to get on, to see how we were to be lodged, and how we were to get a boat; all which I thought I could best settle myself, without his having any trouble. To apply his great mind to minute particulars is wrong: it is like taking an immense balance, such as is kept on quays for weighing cargoes of ships,—to weigh a guinea. I knew I had neat little scales, which would do better; and that his attention to every thing which falls in his way, and his uncommon desire to be always in the right, would make him weigh, if he knew of the particulars: it was right therefore for me to weigh them, and let him have them only in effect. I however continued to ride by him, finding he wished I should do so.

As we passed the barracks at Bernera, I looked at them wishfully, as soldiers have always everything in the best order: but there was only a serjeant and a few men there. We came on to the inn at Glenelg. There was no provender for our horses; so they were sent to grass, with a man to watch them. A maid shewed us up stairs into a room damp and dirty, with bare walls, a variety of bad smells, a coarse black greasy fir table, and forms of the same kind; and out of a wretched bed started a fellow from his sleep, like Edgar in *King Lear*, "Poor Tom's a cold."

This inn was furnished with not a single article that we could either eat or drink; but Mr. Murchison, factor to the Laird of Macleod in Glenelg, sent us a bottle of rum and some sugar, with a polite message, to acquaint us, that he was very sorry that he did not hear of us till we had passed his house, otherwise he should have insisted on our sleeping there that night; and that, if he were not obliged to set out for Inverness early next morning, he would have waited upon us.—Such extraordinary attention from this gentleman, to entire strangers, deserves the most honourable commemoration.

Our bad accommodation here made me uneasy, and almost fretful. Dr. Johnson was calm. I said, he was so from vanity.—JOHNSON. "No, Sir, it is from philosophy."—It pleased me to see that the Rambler could practise so well his own lessons.

I resumed the subject of my leaving him on the road, and endeavoured to defend it better. He was still violent upon that head, and said, "Sir, had you gone on, I was thinking that I should have returned with you to Edinburgh, and then have parted from you, and never spoken to you more."

I sent for fresh hay, with which we made beds for ourselves, each in a room equally miserable. Like Wolfe, we had a "choice of difficulties". Dr. Johnson made things easier by comparison. At M'Queen's, last night, he observed, that few were so well lodged in a ship. To-night he said, we were better than if we had been upon the hill. He lay down buttoned up in his great coat. I had my sheets spread on the hay, and my clothes and great coat laid over me, by way of blankets.

From the "Life of Johnson"

One night, when Beauclerk and Langton had supped at a tavern in London, and sat till about three in the morning, it came into their heads to go and knock up Johnson, and see if they could prevail on him to join them in a ramble. They rapped violently at the door of his chambers in the Temple, till at last he appeared in his shirt, with his little black wig on the top of his head, instead of a night-cap, and a poker in his hand, imagining, probably, that some ruffians were coming to attack him. When he discovered who they were, and was told their errand, he smiled, and with great good humour agreed to their proposal: "What, is it you, you dogs! I'll have a frisk with you." He was soon drest, and they sallied forth together into Covent-Garden, where the greengrocers and fruiterers were beginning to arrange their hampers, just come in from the country. Johnson made some attempts to help them; but the honest gardeners stared so at his figure and manner, and odd interference, that he soon saw his services were not relished. They then repaired to one of the neighbouring taverns, and made a bowl of that liquor called *Bishop*, which Johnson had always liked: while in joyous contempt of sleep, from which he had been roused, he repeated the festive lines,

Short, O short then be thy reign,
And give us to the world again!

They did not stay long, but walked down to the Thames, took a boat, and rowed to Billingsgate. Beauclerk and Johnson were so well pleased with their amusement, that they resolved to persevere in dissipation for the rest of the day: but Langton deserted them, being engaged to breakfast with some young Ladies. Johnson scolded him for "leaving his social friends to go and sit with a set of wretched *un-idea'd* girls". Garrick being told of this ramble, said to him smartly, "I heard of your frolick t'other night. You'll be in the Chronicle." Upon which Johnson afterwards observed, "*He* durst not do such a thing. His *wife* would not let him!"

WILLIAM HENRY IRELAND

(1777 - 1835)

WILLIAM HENRY IRELAND was born in London in 1777. His father, Samuel Ireland, was an engraver and collector of curios; he also wrote a series of "Picturesque Views", illustrated by himself. W. H. Ireland, who sometimes styled himself "Samuel Ireland, junior", and who may have had a better right to his mother's than to his father's surname, was educated at schools at Ealing and Soho, and spent four years in various schools in France. On his return he became a barrister's clerk. His profession gave him free access to ancient parchment, old seals, and specimens of early seventeenth-century handwriting; and he amused himself by forging various Shakespearean documents, to deceive his father. He was only too successful; his father showed his fabrications to his friends, and the demand for more increased the supply. Ireland, who was only seventeen when he began his dark career, seems to have lost his head; he began by forging names on fly-leaves, and a mortgage-deed signed by Shakespeare; such forgeries were not beyond the capacity of a smart lawyer's clerk. He went on to forge the MS. of *King Lear* and of some passages of *Hamlet*, an edifyingly Protestant profession of faith by Shakespeare, and a love-letter, complete with lock of hair, to Anne Hathaway. These relics were publicly exhibited; the sentimental Boswell fell on his knees and kissed them; Dr. Parr, the Whig scholar, and Henry James

Pye, the Poet Laureate, entertained no doubt of their authenticity. Ireland announced that he had inherited these papers from an ancestor, "William Henrye Irelande", who had rescued Shakespeare from drowning in the Thames, and had been given these tokens of the poet's gratitude. With fatal insolence, Ireland proceeded to fabricate a whole play, *Vortigern and Rowena*, which purported to be by Shakespeare. It was produced by Sheridan at Drury Lane on 2nd April, 1796. It would have been produced on the previous day, but for the author's protests. It was greeted with roars of laughter; the groundlings were less easy to deceive than the literati; and there was not a second performance. *Henry II*, another forgery, was never staged. Ireland confessed his guilt in *An Authentic Account of the Shakesperian MSS.* in 1796, and made a fuller statement in his *Confessions* (1805). The situation was complicated by his father, who refused to believe in his son's guilt even after his confession. Ireland became a hack-writer, and wrote many poems, novels, and miscellaneous works of no importance. He died on 17th April, 1835. Unlike those of Chatterton, his forgeries have no literary value. They are of interest as having deceived for a time men of some intellectual attainments like Parr and Pye, who must have had a curious idea of Shakespeare. True scholars like Porson and Malone were never

deceived by Ireland; the *Inquiry* of the latter is the only product of the Ireland controversy which has any permanent value. *The Talk of the Town* (1885), by James Payn, is an historical novel dealing with the episode.

From "An Authentic Account of the Shaksperian Manuscripts"

Amongst other gentlemen who came to view the manuscripts were Dr. P——r, and Dr. W——n; I was in my father's study at the time, they passed the highest encomiums on the stile of the papers in general; and I particularly well remember, after having heard read the *Profession of Faith*, one of them used the following words to my father, "Mr. Ireland, we have very fine things in our *church service*, and our *litany* abounds with beauties, but *here is a man* has distanced us all." I scarce could refrain from laughter on hearing such praises lavished on myself, particularly on a composition not even studied when wrote, I was however struck with astonishment at having attracted the applause of two such learned men, then I first began to think I had any abilities.

I wrote Queen *Elizabeth's* letter from her signature only, which I copied from an original in my father's possession, this letter was produced to make our *Bard* appear noticed by the greatest personage of his time, and thereby add, if possible, fresh lustre to his name.

At a broker's in *Butcher Row*, I one day saw hanging up for sale a coloured drawing, thinking it might serve my purpose, I purchased it, and went to chambers, where, having some water colours, I painted in the letters *W.S.* and the titles of the several plays, I likewise inserted in the corner, the arms of *Shakspear*, but was so unacquainted with them as to make the spear run the contrary way to what it really should do; on the back of the drawing was the figure of a *Dutchman*, this I altered to the character of *Shylock*, by painting in the knife and scales. What I conceive the design originally to have represented was the contrast of a money-getting old father, to a son squandering his property in gay apparel and dissipation; the drawing is certainly very old, but the writing, arms, scales, knife, &c. were all added by myself.

Many persons having said, that if the original manuscript of one of his printed plays should be found, it would prove whether he wrote all the ribaldry attributed to him in the first quarto's.—That led me to write over in the old hand the Tragedy of King *Lear*, and make alterations where I thought the lines beneath him, one of these I shall quote. After *Lear's* death, the Duke offers *Kent* his services, which he refuses: in all the printed copies *Kent* repeats the following couplet so much ridiculed.

Kent.—I have a journey, Sir, shortly to go,
My master calls, and I must not say no.

In lieu of which I inserted the following lines:

"Thanks, Sir, but I go to that unknown land,
That chains each pilgrim fast within its soil,
By living men most shunned most dreaded,
Still my good master this same journey took,
He calls me, I am content, and straight obey;
Then farewell world, the busy scene is done,
Kent lived most true, Kent dies most like a man."

By such alterations the world supposed that all the ribaldry in his other plays was not written by himself but foistered in by the players and printers, herein it cannot be said I injured the reputation of *Shakspear*, on the contrary, the world thought him a much more pure and even writer than before.

GEORGE CANNING

(1770 - 1827)

GEORGE CANNING was born in London on 11th April, 1770. His father, an impecunious barrister who claimed descent from the fifteenth-century mayor of Bristol whose name is linked with that of Chatterton, died when he was a year old, and he was brought up by an uncle. He was educated at Eton and at Christ Church, Oxford, where he graduated B.A. in 1791 and M.A. in 1794. His somewhat enigmatical career belongs to political rather than to literary history; a mere list of the dates of his various offices must here suffice. He entered Parliament as a follower of Pitt in 1794; he was Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs from 1796 to 1799; from 1804 to 1806 he was Treasurer of the Navy; and was Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs from 1807 to 1809, being mainly responsible for the seizure of the Danish fleet. He was ambassador-extraordinary at Lisbon in 1814. In 1822 he was appointed Governor-General of India, and

was on the point of embarking when the suicide of Castlereagh called him to the Cabinet as Foreign Secretary. He was appointed Prime Minister in April, 1827, but his health was broken and his friends and enemies were inextricably mixed. He held office for less than four months, dying on 8th August, 1827.

Canning showed great literary ability in a school magazine, *The Microcosm*. His principal writings are his contributions to the *Anti-Jacobin*, a paper which had a short but brilliant career (from November, 1797, to July, 1798), and which was designed to cast ridicule upon revolutionaries and all holders of unusual views in politics or religion. Gifford was the editor of the paper; its chief contributors were Canning, John Hookham Frere, and George Ellis. The contributions were anonymous, so Canning's share cannot be exactly determined; but it is generally assumed that he wrote the *Needy Knife-grinder*,

The Lament of Rogero, the lines on Mrs. Brownrigg, and *New Morality*, as well as parts of *The Loves of the Triangles*. His parodies are brilliantly witty and extremely telling. The *Anti-Jacobin* did not merely make sedition ridiculous; it laughed several literary fashions out of court, notably the didactic

poems which were so dear to the eighteenth century. It had thus had some share, probably unconsciously, in promoting the Romantic Revival.

[A. G. Stapleton, *Canning and his Times*; Sir J. A. R. Marriott, *George Canning and his Times*; W. Alison Phillips, *George Canning*.]

The Friend of Humanity and the Knife-grinder

Friend of Humanity

"Needy Knife-grinder! whither are you going?
Rough is the road, your wheel is out of order—
Bleak blows the blast;—your hat has got a hole in't,
So have your breeches!

"Weary Knife-grinder! little think the proud ones,
Who in their coaches roll along the turnpike-
road, what hard work 'tis crying all day, 'Knives and
Scissars to grind O!'

"Tell me, Knife-grinder, how came you to grind knives?
Did some rich man tyrannically use you?
Was it the 'squire? or parson of the parish;
Or the attorney?

"Was it the 'squire, for killing of his game? or
Covetous parson, for his tithes distraining?
Or roguish lawyer, made you lose your little
All in a lawsuit?

"(Have you not read the Rights of Man, by Tom Paine?)
Drops of compassion tremble on my eyelids,
Ready to fall, as soon as you have told your
Pitiful story."

Knife-grinder

"Story! God bless you! I have none to tell, Sir,
Only last night a-drinking at the Chequers,
This poor old hat and breeches, as you see, were
Torn in a scuffle.

"Constables came up for to take me into
Custody; they took me before the justice;
Justice Oldmixon put me in the parish-
Stocks for a vagrant.

"I should be glad to drink your Honour's health in
A pot of beer, if you will give me sixpence;
But for my part, I never love to meddle
With politics, Sir."

Friend of Humanity

"I give thee sixpence! I will see thee damn'd first—
Wretch! whom no sense of wrongs can rouse to vengeance—
Sordid, unfeeling, reprobate, degraded,
Spiritless outcast!"

*(Kicks the Knife-grinder, overturns his wheel, and exit in a transport
of Republican enthusiasm and universal philanthropy.)*

WILLIAM GODWIN

(1756 – 1836)

WILLIAM GODWIN was born at Wisbeach, Cambridgeshire, where his father was a dissenting minister, on 3rd March, 1756. After the completion of his education, he followed his father's profession for a few years, but eventually adopted heterodox views, which he changed from time to time, ceased to style himself "Reverend", and removed to London in order to gain his livelihood by literary labours. He soon became known as an extreme Radical, and later as an admirer of the French revolutionaries. He did much respectable hack-work for the booksellers, which need not be detailed here; his *Political Justice* (1793), though now forgotten, was a book of

capital importance in its day. Its extreme and fantastic doctrines would have brought its author within the grasp of the law, but it was lofty in style and its price was three guineas, so the authorities wisely concluded that it would not corrupt the unlettered and impoverished. In 1794 appeared his novel of *Caleb Williams*, which rapidly and deservedly attained an immense popularity, not yet extinct. Its success, however, was in spite of its didactic undercurrent; it has an admirable plot, which is handled in a sensational manner. In March, 1797, he married that remarkable woman Mary Wollstonecraft. She had been born in Hoxton on 27th April, 1759, her

father having been a good-for-nothing Irishman. She had taught privately and in a school for a livelihood, had lived with an American scamp named Imlay, who deserted her after she had borne him a daughter, had attempted to drown herself, and had acquired some fame and much notoriety by her *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792). She and Godwin both objected to marriage as an institution, and Godwin only consented to the ceremony owing to his anxiety as an expectant father. The marriage was happy, but tragically brief. Mrs. Godwin gave birth to a daughter (afterwards Shelley's second wife) on 30th August, 1797, but died ten days later. The pioneer of women's rights in England fell a victim to "the primal eldest curse" of *Genesis*, iii. Godwin wrote a memoir of his wife, published her works, and introduced her into his next novel, *St. Leon* (1799), a good novel not spoilt by its maladroit use of the supernatural. The remainder of his life was marred by an unfortunate second marriage in 1801. Among his subsequent works are *Fleetwood* (1805); *Faulkner*, a tragedy (1807); *A Treatise on*

Population, in reply to Malthus (1820); a well-documented *History of the Commonwealth of England* (1824-1828); *Cloudesley*, a novel (1830); and *Lives of the Necromancers* (1834). He got into debt, sponged on his son-in-law Shelley, went bankrupt, was appointed to a small sinecure (Yeoman usher of the exchequer) by his political friends, and died on 7th April, 1836.

Godwin was in his day a considerable force in literature and in political speculation. He was an extreme Radical, but was averse from the forcible propagation of his gospel, believing that when disseminated properly, it would be universally accepted. Many of his ideas are ludicrously impossible and mutually contradictory. He is now remembered mainly as the author of *Caleb Williams*, the husband of Mary Wollstonecraft, and the father-in-law of Shelley.

[C. K. Paul, *William Godwin: His Friends and Contemporaries*; H. N. Brailsford, *Shelley, Godwin, and their Circle*; E. R. Pennell, *Life of Mary Wollstonecraft*; G. R. S. Taylor, *Mary Wollstonecraft*; F. K. Brown, *The Life of William Godwin*.]

From "Caleb Williams"

VOL. II. CHAPTER XI

For my own part, I had never seen a prison, and, like the majority of my brethren, had given myself little concern to enquire what was the condition of those who committed offence against, or became obnoxious to suspicion from, the community. Oh, how enviable is the most tottering shed under which the labourer retires to rest, compared with the residence of these walls!

To me every thing was new,—the massy doors, the resounding locks,

the gloomy passages, and the grated windows, and the characteristic looks of the keepers, accustomed to reject every petition, and to steel their hearts against feeling and pity. Curiosity, and a sense of my situation, induced me to fix my eyes on the faces of these men; but in a few minutes I drew them away with unconquerable loathing. It is impossible to describe the sort of squalidness and filth with which these mansions are distinguished. I have seen dirty faces in dirty apartments, which have nevertheless borne the impression of health, and spoke carelessness and levity rather than distress. But the dirt of a prison speaks sadness to the heart, and appears to be already in a state of putridity and infection.

I was detained for more than an hour in the apartment of the keeper, one turnkey after another coming in, that they might make themselves familiar with my person. As I was already considered as guilty of felony to a considerable amount, I underwent a rigorous search, and they took from me a penknife, a pair of scissors, and that part of my money which was in gold. It was debated whether or not these should be sealed up, to be returned to me, as they said, as soon as I should be acquitted; and had I not displayed an unexpected firmness of manner and vigour of expostulation, such was probably the conduct that would have been pursued. Having undergone these ceremonies, I was thrust into a day-room, in which all the persons then under confinement for felony were assembled, to the number of eleven. Each of them was too much engaged in his own reflections, to take notice of me. Of these, two were imprisoned for horse-stealing, and three for having stolen a sheep, one for shop-lifting, one for coining, two for highway-robbery, and two for burglary.

The horse-stealers were engaged in a game at cards, which was presently interrupted by a difference of opinion, attended with great vociferation,—they calling upon one and another to decide it, to no purpose; one paying no attention to their summons, and another leaving them in the midst of their story, being no longer able to endure his own internal anguish, in the midst of their mummery.

It is a custom among thieves to constitute a sort of mock tribunal of their own body, from whose decision every one is informed whether he shall be acquitted, respited, or pardoned, as well as respecting the supposed most skilful way of conducting his defence. One of the house-breakers, who had already passed this ordeal, and was stalking up and down the room with a forced bravery, exclaimed to his companion, that he was as rich as the Duke of Bedford himself. He had five guineas and a half, which was as much as he could possibly spend in the course of the ensuing month; and what happened after that, it was Jack Ketch's business to see to, not his. As he uttered these words, he threw himself abruptly upon a bench that was near him, and seemed to be asleep in a moment. But his sleep was uneasy and disturbed, his breathing was hard, and, at intervals, had rather the nature of a groan. A young fellow from the other side of

the room came softly to the place where he lay, with a large knife in his hand; and pressed the back of it with such violence upon his neck, the head hanging over the side of the bench, that it was not till after several efforts that he was able to rise. "Oh, Jack!" cries this manual jester, "I had almost done your business for you!" The other expressed no marks of resentment, but sullenly answered, "Damn you, why did not you take the edge? It would have been the best thing you have done this many a day!"

The case of one of the persons committed for highway-robbery was not a little extraordinary. He was a common soldier of a most engaging physiognomy, and two-and-twenty years of age. The prosecutor, who had been robbed one evening, as he returned late from the alehouse, of the sum of three shillings, swore positively to his person. The character of the prisoner was such as has seldom been equalled. He had been ardent in the pursuit of intellectual cultivation, and was accustomed to draw his favourite amusement from the works of Virgil and Horace. The humbleness of his situation, combined with his ardour for literature, only served to give an inexpressible heightening to the interestingness of his character. He was plain and unaffected; he assumed nothing; he was capable, when occasion demanded, of firmness, but, in his ordinary deportment he seemed unarmed and unresisting, unsuspecting of guile in others, as he was totally free from guile in himself. His integrity was proverbially great. In one instance he had been intrusted by a lady to convey a sum of a thousand pounds to a person at some miles distance; in another, he was employed by a gentleman, during his absence, in the care of his house and furniture, to the value of at least five times that sum. His habits of thinking were strictly his own, full of justice, simplicity, and wisdom. He from time to time earned money of his officers, by his peculiar excellence in furbishing arms; but he declined offers that had been made him to become a serjeant or a corporal, saying that he did not want money, and that in a new situation he should have less leisure for study. He was equally constant in refusing presents that were offered him by persons who had been struck with his merit; not that he was under the influence of false delicacy and pride, but that he had no inclination to accept that, the want of which he did not feel to be an evil. This man died while I was in prison. I received his last breath.

The whole day I was obliged to spend in the company of these men, some of them having really committed the actions laid to their charge, others whom their ill fortune had rendered the victims of suspicion. The whole was a scene of misery, such as nothing short of actual observation can suggest to the mind. Some were noisy and obstreperous, endeavouring by a false bravery to keep at bay the remembrance of their condition; while others, incapable even of this effort, had the torment of their thoughts aggravated by the perpetual noise and confusion that prevailed around

them. In the faces of those who assumed the most courage, you might trace the furrows of anxious care; and in the midst of their laboured hilarity dreadful ideas would ever and anon intrude, convulsing their features, and working every line into an expression of the keenest agony. To these men the sun brought no return of joy. Day after day rolled on, but their state was immutable. Existence was to them a scene of invariable melancholy; every moment was a moment of anguish; yet did they wish to prolong that moment, fearful that the coming period would bring a severer fate. They thought of the past with insupportable repentance, each man contented to give his right hand to have again the choice of that peace and liberty, which he had unthinkingly bartered away. We talk of instruments of torture; Englishmen take credit to themselves for having banished the use of them from their happy shore! Alas! he that has observed the secrets of a prison, well knows that there is more torture in the lingering existence of a criminal, in the silent intolerable minutes that he spends, than in the tangible misery of whips and racks!

Such were our days. At sunset our jailors appeared, and ordered each man to come away, and be locked into his dungeon. It was a bitter aggravation of our fate, to be under the arbitrary control of these fellows. They felt no man's sorrow; they were of all men least capable of any sort of feeling. They had a barbarous and sullen pleasure in issuing their detested mandates, and observing the mournful reluctance with which they were obeyed. Whatever they directed, it was in vain to expostulate; fetters, and bread and water, were the sure consequences of resistance. Their tyranny had no other limit than their own caprice. To whom shall the unfortunate felon appeal? To what purpose complain, when his complaints are sure to be received with incredulity? A tale of mutiny and necessary precaution is the unfailing refuge of the keeper, and this tale is an everlasting bar against redress.

Our dungeons were cells, $7\frac{1}{2}$ feet by $6\frac{1}{2}$, below the surface of the ground, damp, without window, light, or air, except from a few holes worked for that purpose in the door. In some of these miserable receptacles three persons were put to sleep together. I was fortunate enough to have one to myself. It was now the approach of winter. We were not allowed to have candles, and, as I have already said, were thrust in here at sunset, and not liberated till the returning day. This was our situation for fourteen or fifteen hours out of the four-and-twenty. I had never been accustomed to sleep more than six or seven hours, and my inclination to sleep was now less than ever. Thus was I reduced to spend half my day in this dreary abode, and in complete darkness. This was no trifling aggravation of my lot.

JOANNA BAILLIE

(1762 – 1851)

JOANNA BAILLIE was born at Bothwell, Lanarkshire, where her father was minister, on 11th September, 1762. Her mother was the sister of William and John Hunter. She was educated at Glasgow, and showed early signs of unusual ability. She went to London with her widowed mother in 1784, and there she published, in 1790, a small volume entitled *Fugitive Verses*. Her fame grew when, in 1798, she published *A Series of Plays*, in which she attempted to delineate the stronger passions by making each passion the subject of a tragedy and a comedy. The series was followed up by a second volume in 1802, and a third in 1812; it was completed by three dramas contained in *Miscellaneous Plays* (1836). Her plays were greatly hampered by her theory of the ruling passion, which limited her scope much as Jonson's theory of humours limited his. They have a theatrical air; though they were written with no knowledge of stage-craft, they were not intended to be closet-dramas, but Miss Baillie found

difficulty in persuading theatrical managers to produce them. *De Monfort* was produced at Drury Lane in 1800, with Kemble and Mrs. Siddons in the cast, but its success was only moderate. *The Family Legend* was brought out at Edinburgh in 1810, under the patronage of Sir Walter Scott, and was played fourteen times and several times revived. Some of Miss Baillie's songs and ballads, vernacular and otherwise, enjoyed a great celebrity, and are not now so utterly forgotten as her plays. Her long but uneventful life came to an end at Hampstead on 23rd February, 1851. Her reputation as dramatist and poet, which was considerable, is now extinct. She owed it in part to her amiability and her attractive personality. Scott's tribute to her (see introduction to third canto of *Marmion*) was evoked by his personal friendship for the author, who fully deserved as a woman the praises she scarcely merited as a dramatist.

[Margaret S. Carhart, *The Life and Work of Joanna Baillie*.]

Orra

(Act III, Scene I)

(*A Forest with a half-ruined castle in the background, seen through the trees by moonlight. FRANKO and several OUTLAWS are discovered sitting on the ground, round a fire, with flagons, &c., by them, as if they had been drinking.*)

Song of several voices

The chough and crow to roost are gone,
The owl sits on the tree,
The hush'd wind wails with feeble moan,
Like infant charity.

JOANNA BAILLIE

The wild-fire dances on the fen,
 The red star sheds its ray,
 Uprouse ye, then, my merry men!
 It is our op'ning day.

Both child and nurse are fast asleep,
 And clos'd is every flower,
 And winking tapers faintly peep
 High from my lady's bower;
 Bewilder'd hinds with shorten'd ken
 Shrink on their murky way,
 Uprouse ye, then, my merry men!
 It is our op'ning day.

Nor board nor garner own we now,
 Nor roof nor latched door,
 Nor kind mate, bound by holy vow
 To bless a good man's store;
 Noon lulls us in a gloomy den,
 And night is grown our day,
 Uprouse ye, then, my merry men!
 And use it as ye may.

FRANKO

(*to 1st Outlaw*). How lik'st thou this, Fernando?

1ST OUTLAW

Well sung i' faith! but serving ill our turn,
 Who would all trav'lers and benighted folks
 Scare from our precincts. Such sweet harmony
 Will rather tempt invasion.

FRANKO

Fear not, for mingled voices, heard afar,
 Through glade and glen and thicket, stealing on
 To distant list'ners, seem wild-goblin-sounds;
 At which the lonely trav'ler checks his steed,
 Pausing with long-drawn breath and keen-turn'd ear,
 And twilight pilferers cast down in haste
 Their ill-got burthens, while the homeward hind
 Turns from his path, full many a mile about,
 Through bog and mire to grope his blund'ring way.
 Such, to the startled ear of superstition,
 Were seraph's song, could we like seraphs sing.

(*Enter 2ND OUTLAW, hastily*)

2ND OUTLAW

Disperse ye diff'rent ways: we are undone.

FRANKO

How sayst thou, shrinking poltroon? we undone!
Outlaw'd and ruin'd men, who live by daring!

2ND OUTLAW

A train of armed men, some noble dame
Escorting (so their scatter'd words discover'd
As, unperceiv'd, I hung upon their rear),
Are close at hand, and mean to pass the night
Within the castle.

FRANKO

Some benighted travellers,
Bold from their numbers, or who ne'er have heard
The ghostly legend of this dreaded place.

1ST OUTLAW

Let us keep close within our vaulted haunts;
The way to which is tangled and perplex'd,
And cannot be discover'd: with the morn
They will depart.

FRANKO

Nay, by the holy mass! within those walls
Not for a night must trav'lers quietly rest,
Or few or many. Would we live securely,
We must uphold the terrors of the place:
Therefore, let us prepare our midnight rouse.
See, from the windows of the castle gleam

[*Lights seen from the castle.*

Quick passing lights, as though they moved within
In hurried preparation; and that bell, [Bell heard.
Which from yon turret its shrill 'larum sends,
Betokens some unwonted stir. Come, hearts!
Be all prepared, before the midnight watch,
The fiend-like din of our infernal chace
Around the walls to raise.—Come; night advances. [*Exeunt.*

ANN RADCLIFFE

(1764 - 1823)

ANN WARD was born in London on 9th July, 1764. Her father was an affluent business man. She married, at the age of twenty-three, William Radcliffe, afterwards editor and proprietor of *The English Chronicle*. She published in quick succession, *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, a Highland story (1789); *A Sicilian Romance* (1790); and *The Romance of the Forest* (1791). Her masterpiece is considered to be *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794), which was long very popular. The last of her novels published during her life was *The Italian* (1797), a stronger novel in some respects than *Udolpho*, and remarkable for its villain Schedoni, the first appearance in fact or fiction of the Byronic hero. A posthumous romance, *Gaston de Blondville*, was edited by T. N. Talfourd in 1826, together with some valueless poetical pieces. This romance had been written in 1802, so that during the last twenty years of her life Mrs. Radcliffe did nothing to increase the fame and fortune which she had won with comparative ease. Her life was so retired that some of her admirers antedated her death by many years, while others said, without the slightest justification, that her mind had been unhinged by the horrors she had invented, and that she was in a private asylum. She died on 7th February, 1823.

Mrs. Radcliffe was one of the foremost writers of the Tale of Terror, that form of tale which bears the same relation to the

novel that melodrama bears to the legitimate drama. Scott has given an admirable summary of the *Dramatis Personæ* of such tales: "A dark and tyrannical count; an aged crone of a housekeeper, the depository of many a family legend; a garrulous waiting-maid; a gay and light-hearted valet; a villain or two of all-work; and a heroine, fulfilled with all perfections, and subjected to all manner of hazards." She introduces all the stock stage-properties, a Gothic castle, a secret passage, a mouldering manuscript which becomes illegible when it is just going to reveal the heart of the mystery—all are there. She has, however, a real gift for describing landscapes, which have been compared to those of Salvator Rosa; some of her descriptions of scenery are quite admirably done, and show her to have been more of an artist in words than most of the exponents of the Tale of Terror. Her use of the supernatural is not artistic; she explains her effects towards the end of her books, by an application of Theseus's dictum that:

in the night, imagining some fear,
How easy is a bush suppos'd a bear!

Her characters move in an unreal world, and the conclusion of each story is lame and impotent. Readers of Bram Stoker and more recent writers of sensational fiction will find little in her pages to arrest their attention; her chief interest lies in the fact that our ancestors found her enthralling.

[Clara F. McIntyre, *Ann Radcliffe in relation to her Time.*]

From "The Mysteries of Udolpho"

The aspect of the country now began to change, and the travellers soon found themselves among mountains covered from their base nearly to their summits with forests of gloomy pine, except where a rock of granite shot up from the vale, and lost its snowy top in the clouds. The rivulet which had hitherto accompanied them, now expanded into a river; and, flowing deeply and silently along, reflected, as in a mirror, the blackness of the impending shades. Sometimes a cliff was seen lifting its bold head above the woods and the vapours, that floated mid-way down the mountains; and sometimes a face of perpendicular marble rose from the water's edge, over which the larch threw his gigantic arms, here scathed with lightning, and there floating in luxuriant foliage.

They continued to travel over a rough and unfrequented road, seeing now and then at a distance the solitary shepherd, with his dog, stalking along the valley, and hearing only the dashing of torrents, which the woods concealed from the eye, the long sullen murmur of the breeze, as it swept over the pines, or the notes of the eagle and the vulture, which were seen towering round the beetling cliff.

Often, as the carriage moved slowly over uneven ground, St. Aubert alighted, and amused himself with examining the curious plants that grew on the banks of the road, and with which these regions abound; while Emily, wrapt in high enthusiasm, wandered away under the shades, listening in deep silence to the lonely murmur of the woods.

Neither village nor hamlet was seen for many leagues; the goat-herd's or the hunter's cabin, perched among the cliffs of the rocks, were the only human habitations that appeared.

The travellers again took their dinner in the open air, on a pleasant spot in the valley, under the spreading shade of cedars; and then set forward towards Beaujeu.

The road now began to ascend, and, leaving the pine forests behind, wound among rocky precipices. The evening twilight again fell over the scene, and the travellers were ignorant how far they might yet be from Beaujeu. St. Aubert, however, conjectured that the distance could not be very great, and comforted himself with the prospect of travelling on a more frequented road after reaching that town, where he designed to pass the night. Mingled woods, and rocks, and heathy mountains were now seen obscurely through the dusk; but soon even these imperfect images faded in darkness. Michael proceeded with caution, for he could scarcely distinguish the road; his mules, however, seemed to have more sagacity, and their steps were sure.

MATTHEW GREGORY LEWIS

(1775 - 1818)

MATTHEW GREGORY LEWIS was born in London on 9th July, 1775. His father was Deputy Secretary-at-War, and owned much property in Jamaica. He was educated at Westminster and Christ Church, Oxford, visited Weimar and saw Goethe, became a good German scholar, and, at the age of nineteen, was appointed attaché to the British embassy at The Hague. While there he wrote his most famous (or most infamous) book, *Ambrosio, or The Monk*, which was published in 1795, before he was twenty. It at once became popular, and its popularity was enhanced when the Attorney-General took the preliminary steps towards its suppression. A second edition omitted some of the most flagrantly salacious passages, but the indecency of the work was inherent in its subject, which was taken from Steele's *Guardian*, No. 148. Lewis sat in Parliament from 1796 to 1802, and was a well-known figure in his day, with a considerable reputation for being a bore. His other works include *Feudal Tyrants*, a romance; *Romantic Tales*; *The Castle Spectre*, a romantic drama (1798); *Adelmorn, or The Outlaw* (1800); and *Alphonso, King of Castile* (1801). In

1812 his father died, and left him all his property. He visited Jamaica twice, took a keen interest in the welfare of his negro slaves, wrote his most interesting though not his most important book about Jamaica (*Journal of a West Indian Proprietor*, 1834), and died of yellow fever on 14th May, 1818, soon after he had sailed for England. *The Monk*, which gave Lewis his reputation and his nickname, is, in spite of its numerous faults—its melodrama, its indecency, and its disgusting qualities—a wonderful *tour de force* for a boy of nineteen. It was inspired not only by Steele's story, but by an early study of Glanvill (q.v.) and by the success of *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, which was just out when Lewis began to write. It is historically interesting as a thread connecting the literature of Germany and England. It is curious to find Scott looking up to Lewis as a man whose fame was secure, while his own reputation was still to make. None of Lewis's work is remembered except *The Monk*, which is at once the most powerful and the most unpleasant of the Tales of Terror.

From "The Monk"

Ambrosio, rather dead than alive, was left alone in his dungeon. The moment in which this terrible decree was pronounced had nearly proved that of his dissolution. He looked forward to the morrow with despair, and his terrors increased with the approach of midnight. Sometimes he

was buried in gloomy silence; at others he raved with delirious passion, wrung his hands, and cursed the hour when he first beheld the light. In one of these moments his eye rested upon Matilda's mysterious gift. His transports of rage were instantly suspended. He looked earnestly at the book; he took it up, but immediately threw it from him with horror. He walked rapidly up and down his dungeon—then stopped and again fixed his eyes on the spot where the book had fallen. He reflected that here at least was a resource from the fate which he dreaded. He stooped, and took it up a second time. He remained for some time trembling and irresolute; he longed to try the charm, yet feared its consequences. The recollection of his sentence at length fixed his indecision. He opened the volume; but his agitation was so great, that he at first sought in vain for the page mentioned by Matilda. Ashamed of himself, he called all his courage to his aid. He turned to the seventh leaf; he began to read it aloud; but his eyes frequently wandered from the book, while he anxiously cast them round in search of the spirit, whom he wished, yet dreaded to behold. Still he persisted in his design; and with a voice unassured, and frequent interruptions, he contrived to finish the four first lines of the page.

They were in a language whose import was totally unknown to him. Scarce had he pronounced the last word, when the effects of the charm were evident. A loud burst of thunder was heard, the prison shook to its very foundations, a blaze of lightning flashed through the cell, and in the next moment, borne upon sulphurous whirlwinds, Lucifer stood before him a second time. But he came not as when, at Matilda's summons, he borrowed the seraph's form, to deceive Ambrosio. He appeared in all that ugliness which, since his fall from heaven, had been his portion. His blasted limbs still bore marks of the Almighty's thunder. A swarthy darkness spread itself over his gigantic form: his hands and feet were armed with long talons. Fury glared in his eyes, which might have struck the bravest heart with terror. Over his huge shoulders waved two enormous sable wings; and his hair was supplied by living snakes, which twined themselves round his brows with frightful hissings. In one hand he held a roll of parchment, and in the other an iron pen. Still the lightning flashed around him, and the thunder with repeated bursts seemed to announce the dissolution of Nature.

Terrified at an apparition so different from what he had expected, Ambrosio remained gazing upon the fiend, deprived of the power of utterance. The thunder had ceased to roll: universal silence reigned through the dungeon.

"For what am I summoned hither?" said the demon, in a voice which sulphurous fogs had damped to hoarseness.

At the sound, Nature seemed to tremble. A violent earthquake rocked the ground, accompanied by a fresh burst of thunder, louder and more appalling than the first.

Ambrosio was long unable to answer the demon's demand.

"I am condemned to die," he said with a faint voice, his blood running cold while he gazed upon his dreadful visitor. "Save me! bear me from hence!"

"Shall the reward of my services be paid me? Dare you embrace my cause? Will you be mine, body and soul? Are you prepared to renounce Him who made you, and Him who died for you? Answer but 'Yes'! and Lucifer is your slave."

"Will no less price content you? Can nothing satisfy you but my eternal ruin? Spirit, you ask too much. Yet convey me from this dungeon,—be my servant for one hour, and I will be yours for a thousand years. Will not this offer suffice?"

"It will not. I must have your soul—must have it mine, and mine for ever."

"Insatiate demon! I will not doom myself to endless torments; I will not give up my hopes of being one day pardoned."

"You will not! On what chimera rest, then, your hopes? Short-sighted mortal! Miserable wretch! Are you not guilty? Are you not infamous in the eyes of men and angels? Can such enormous sins be forgiven? Hope you to escape my power? Your fate is already pronounced. The Eternal has abandoned you. Mine you are marked in the book of destiny, and mine you must and shall be."

"Fiend! 'Tis false! Infinite is the Almighty's power, and the penitent shall meet His forgiveness. My crimes are monstrous, but I will not despair of pardon. Haply, when they have received due chastisement——"

"Chastisement! Was purgatory meant for guilt like yours? Hope you that your offences shall be bought off by prayers of superstitious dotards and droning monks? Ambrosio, be wise. Mine you must be. You are doomed to flames, but may shun them for the present. Sign this parchment: I will bear you from hence, and you may pass your remaining years in bliss and liberty. Enjoy your existence: indulge in every pleasure to which appetite may lead you. But from the moment that it quits your body, remember that your soul belongs to me, and that I will not be defrauded of my right."

The monk was silent: but his looks declared that the tempter's words were not thrown away. He reflected on the conditions proposed with horror. On the other hand, he believed himself doomed to perdition, and that, by refusing the demon's succour, he only hastened tortures which he never could escape. The fiend saw that his resolution was shaken. He renewed his instances, and endeavoured to fix the abbot's indecision. He described the agonies of death in the most terrific colours; and he worked so powerfully upon Ambrosio's despair and fears, that he prevailed upon him to receive the parchment. He then struck the iron pen which he held into a vein of the monk's left hand. It pierced deep,

and was instantly filled with blood; yet Ambrosio felt no pain from the wound. The pen was put into his hand: it trembled. The wretch placed the parchment on the table before him, and prepared to sign it. Suddenly he held his hand; he started away hastily, and threw the pen upon the table.

"What am I doing?" he cried. Then turning to the fiend with a desperate air: "Leave me! Begone! I will not sign the parchment."

"Fool!" exclaimed the disappointed demon, darting looks so furious as penetrated the friar's soul with horror. "Thus am I trifled with? Go then! Rave in agony, expire in tortures, and then learn the extent of the Eternal's mercy! But beware how you make me again your mock! Call me no more, till resolved to accept my offers. Summon me a second time to dismiss me thus idly, and these talons shall rend you into a thousand pieces. Speak yet again: will you sign the parchment?"

"I will not. Leave me. Away!"

Instantly the thunder was heard to roll horribly; once more the earth trembled with violence: the dungeon resounded with loud shrieks, and the demon fled with blasphemy and curses.

GEORGE CRABBE

(1754 - 1832)

GEORGE CRABBE was born at Aldeburgh, Suffolk, on Christmas Eve, 1754. His father had been a village schoolmaster and parish clerk; he was then collector of salt duties and general "factotum" of Aldeburgh. Crabbe attended schools at Bungay and Stowmarket, but was mainly self-educated. At the age of fourteen he was apprenticed to a village doctor; three years later his indentures were transferred to a surgeon at Woodbridge. His earliest poem, *Inebriety*, an immature satire, was published in 1774. After walking the London hospitals for a while, he set up as a surgeon in Aldeburgh, but met with little success. In despair, he sailed to London in the spring of 1780, with three pounds in his

pocket, determined to win a livelihood by means of his poems. At first he experienced the usual fate of literary adventurers; one poem, *The Candidate*, was published but not paid for; the rest did not even achieve that unsatisfactory form of success. At last, early in 1781, Crabbe, who was destitute of the common necessities of life, and feared a debtors' prison, wrote to Burke, to whom he was quite unknown. Burke at once took him under his wing, and Crabbe never again knew what it was to want. *The Library* appeared in 1781, and was moderately successful. Late in the same year Crabbe, on Burke's recommendation, took holy orders, and was licensed as curate to the rector of Aldeburgh.

In 1782 he became chaplain to the Duke of Rutland, and from then onwards held many comfortable benefices, which need not be detailed here. Like most churchmen of the time, he felt no qualms about holding pluralities, or about discharging many of his spiritual duties by deputy. He was, however, a sound parson of the old school, and was kind and charitable to the poor, never forgetting his own experience of poverty. In 1783 he published *The Village*, in which he first showed his characteristic genius; its success was instantaneous and great. *The Newspaper*, a much less striking poem, appeared in 1785. Crabbe published nothing more for twenty-two years, but he read widely, studied botany, and also wrote profusely, but subjected his writings to a periodical holocaust. He wrote with great ease and fluency, and it is probable that the "incrimination" of his poems was not detrimental to his reputation. In 1807 he broke his long silence with *The Parish Register*; *The Borough*, perhaps his best work, followed in 1810, and *Tales in Verse* in 1812. In 1814, after the death of his wife, he was given the living of Trowbridge, Wiltshire, where he remained until his death. He visited London often, and became friendly with Rogers, Moore, and Campbell. In 1819 he published his final volume, *Tales of the Hall*, receiving for it and the copyright of his earlier poems £3000. He passed away peacefully on 3rd February, 1832. His *Life* was written, admirably and piously, by his elder son.

The principal features of all Crabbe's poems are their realism

and their sincerity. He was determined to "hold the mirror up to Nature" as he saw it in villages and country towns, and to break away from the ancient pastoral convention. He asks, at the beginning of his first poem of importance,

From Truth and Nature shall we
widely stray,
Where Virgil, not where Fancy, leads
the way?

His nature made him, perhaps, too much of a pessimist; pessimism is a sin which easily besets a realist. He was too fond of depicting the seamy side of life, but he depicted it as an artist, not as a photographer, thus avoiding one of the principal faults of more recent realists. The peculiar flavour of Crabbe's poetry is due to the contrast between their matter and their manner. Poetically speaking, he is an extreme Radical in his matter, and an ultra-Tory in his manner. His experiments in realism powerfully affected the new school of poetry, and helped to ring the death-knell of the elegant and artificial verse of the eighteenth century; but his verse is the verse of Dryden (it is, contrary to an often-repeated criticism or rather witticism of Horace Smith's, liker to Dryden's verse than to Pope's); and he adhered, with rare exceptions, to the heroic couplet. Crabbe could tell a story well; had the trained eye of a botanist and geologist for stocks and stones; could draw admirable landscapes; and, whether depicting Man or Nature, kept his eye firmly fixed on the object. He links the generation of Burke, Johnson, and Reynolds to that of Moore, Scott, and Byron. His readers are not

numerous now, unfortunately; his admirers in the past have included Scott, Wordsworth, Miss Austen, who in an unmaidenly moment said she could imagine herself married to him, Tennyson, Newman, and FitzGerald, to whom his connexion with Suffolk made him doubly dear.

[A. Ainger, *Crabbe* (English Men of Letters Series); T. E. Kebbel, *The Life of George Crabbe*; R. Huchon, *Un Poète Réaliste Anglais* (English translation known as *George Crabbe and his Times*); A. M. Broadley and W. Jerrold, *The Romance of an Elderly Poet.*]

From "The Village"

BOOK I

I grant indeed that fields and flocks have charms
For him that grazes or for him that farms;
But when amid such pleasing scenes I trace
The poor laborious natives of the place,
And see the mid-day sun, with fervid ray,
On their bare heads and dewy temples play;
While some, with feeble heads and fainter hearts,
Deplore their fortune, yet sustain their parts—
Then shall I dare these real ills to hide
In tinsel trappings of poetic pride?

No; cast by Fortune on a frowning coast,
Which neither groves nor happy valleys boast;
Where other cares than those the Muse relates,
And other shepherds dwell with other mates;
By such examples taught, I paint the Cot,
As Truth will paint it, and as Bards will not:
Nor you, ye Poor, of letter'd scorn complain,
To you the smoothest song is smooth in vain;
O'ercome by labour, and bow'd down by time,
Fed you the barren flattery of a rhyme?
Can poets soothe you, when you pine for bread,
By winding myrtles round your ruin'd shed?
Can their light tales your weighty griefs o'erpower,
Or glad with airy mirth the toilsome hour?

Lo! where the heath, with withering brake grown o'er,
Lends the light turf that warms the neighbouring poor;
From thence a length of burning sand appears,
Where the thin harvest waves its wither'd ears;
Rank weeds, that every art and care defy,
Reign o'er the land, and rob the blighted rye:
There thistles stretch their prickly arms afar,

And to the ragged infant threaten war;
There poppies nodding, mock the hope of toil;
There the blue bugloss paints the sterile soil;
Hardy and high, above the slender sheaf,
The slimy mallow waves her silky leaf;
O'er the young shoot the charlock throws a shade,
And clasping tares cling round the sickly blade;
With mingled tints the rocky coasts abound,
And a sad splendour vainly shines around.
So looks the nymph, whom wretched arts adorn,
Betray'd by man, then left for man to scorn;
Whose cheek in vain assumes the mimic rose,
While her sad eyes the troubled breast disclose;
Whose outward splendour is but folly's dress,
Exposing most, when most it gilds distress.

Here joyless roam a wild amphibious race,
With sullen woe display'd in every face;
Who, far from civil arts and social fly,
And scowl at strangers with suspicious eye.

Here too the lawless merchant of the main
Draws from his plough th' intoxicated swain;
Want only claim'd the labour of the day,
But vice now steals his nightly rest away.

Where are the swains, who, daily labour done,
With rural games play'd down the setting sun;
Who struck with matchless force the bounding ball,
Or made the pond'rous quoit obliquely fall;
While some huge Ajax, terrible and strong,
Engaged some artful stripling of the throng,
And fell beneath him, foil'd, while far around
Hoarse triumph rose, and rocks return'd the sound?
Where now are these?—Beneath yon cliff they stand,
To show the freighted pinnacle where to land;
To load the ready steed with guilty haste,
To fly in terror o'er the pathless waste,
Or, when detected, in their straggling course,
To foil their foes by cunning or by force;
Or, yielding part (which equal knaves demand),
To gain a lawless passport through the land.

From "The Parish Register"

PART II. MARRIAGES

Two summers since, I saw at Lammas Fair
 The sweetest flower that ever blossom'd there,
 When *Phoebe Dawson* gaily cross'd the Green,
 In haste to see and happy to be seen:
 Her air, her manners, all who saw admired;
 Courteous though coy, and gentle though retired;
 The joy of youth and health her eyes display'd,
 And ease of heart her every look convey'd;
 A native skill her simple robes express'd,
 As with untutor'd elegance she dress'd;
 The lads around admired so fair a sight,
 And *Phoebe* felt, and felt she gave, delight.
 Admirers soon of every age she gain'd,
 Her beauty won them and her worth retain'd;
 Envy itself could no contempt display,
 They wish'd her well, whom yet they wish'd away.
 Correct in thought, she judg'd a servant's place
 Preserved a rustic beauty from disgrace;
 But yet on Sunday-eve, in freedom's hour,
 With secret joy she felt that beauty's power,
 When some proud bliss upon the heart would steal
 That, poor or rich, a beauty still must feel.

At length, the youth ordain'd to move her breast,
 Before the swains with bolder spirit press'd;
 With looks less timid made his passion known,
 And pleased by manners most unlike her own;
 Loud though in love, and confident though young;
 Fierce in his air, and voluble of tongue;
 By trade a tailor, though, in scorn of trade,
 He served the 'Squire, and brush'd the coat he made.
 Yet now, would *Phoebe* her consent afford,
 Her slave alone, again he'd mount the board;
 With her should years of growing love be spent;
 And growing wealth;—she sigh'd and look'd consent.

Now, through the lane, up hill, and 'cross the Green,
 (Seen by but few, and blushing to be seen—
 Dejected, thoughtful, anxious, and afraid,)
 Led by the lover, walk'd the silent maid;
 Slow through the meadows roved they, many a mile,
 Toy'd by each bank, and trifled at each stile;

Where, as he painted every blissful view,
And highly colour'd what he strongly drew,
The pensive damsel, prone to tender fears,
Dimm'd the false prospect with prophetic tears.
Thus pass'd th' allotted hours, till lingering late,
The lover loiter'd at the master's gate;
There he pronounced adieu! and yet would stay,
Till chidden—soothed—entreated—forced away;
He would of coldness, though indulged, complain,
And oft retire, and oft return again;
When, if his teasing vex'd her gentle mind,
The grief assumed, compell'd her to be kind!
For he would proof of plighted kindness crave,
That she resented first, and then forgave;
And to his grief and penance yielded more
Than his presumption had required before.
Ah! fly temptation, youth; refrain! refrain!
Each yielding maid and each presuming swain!

Lo! now with red rent cloak and bonnet black,
And torn green gown loose hanging at her back,
One who an infant in her arms sustains,
And seems in patience striving with her pains;
Pinch'd are her looks, as one who pines for bread,
Whose cares are growing and whose hopes are fled.
Pale her parch'd lips, her heavy eyes sunk low,
And tears unnoticed from their channels flow;
Serene her manner, till some sudden pain
Frets the meek soul, and then she's calm again;—
Her broken pitcher to the pool she takes,
And every step with cautious terror makes;
For not alone that infant in her arms,
But nearer cause, her anxious soul alarms.
With water burthen'd, then she picks her way,
Slowly and cautious, in the clinging clay;
Till, in mid-green, she trusts a place unsound,
And deeply plunges in th' adhesive ground;
Thence, but with pain, her slender foot she takes,
While hope the mind as strength the frame forsakes:
For when so full the cup of sorrow grows,
Add but a drop, it instantly o'erflows.
And now her path, but not her peace, she gains,
Safe from her task, but shivering with her pains;
Her home she reaches, open leaves the door,

And placing first her infant on the floor,
 She bares her bosom to the wind, and sits,
 And sobbing struggles with the rising fits:
 In vain, they come, she feels the inflating grief,
 That shuts the swelling bosom from relief;
 That speaks in feeble cries a soul distress'd,
 Or the sad laugh that cannot be repress'd.
 The neighbour-matron leaves her wheel and flies
 With all the aid her poverty supplies;
 Unfee'd, the calls of Nature she obeys,
 Not led by profit, not allur'd by praise;
 And waiting long, till these contentions cease,
 She speaks of comfort, and departs in peace.
 Friend of distress! the mourner feels thy aid;
 She cannot pay thee, but thou wilt be paid.

But who this child of weakness, want, and care?
 'Tis *Phoebe Dawson*, pride of Lammas Fair;
 Who took her lover for his sparkling eyes,
 Expressions warm, and love-inspiring lies:
 Compassion first assail'd her gentle heart,
 For all his suffering, all his bosom's smart;
 "And then his prayers! they would a savage move
 And win the coldest of the sex to love:"—
 But ah! too soon his looks success declared,
 Too late her loss the marriage-rite repair'd;
 The faithless flatterer then his vows forgot,
 A captious tyrant or a noisy sot;
 If present, railing, till he saw her pain'd;
 If absent, spending what their labours gain'd;
 Till that fair form in want and sickness pined,
 And hope and comfort fled that gentle mind.
 Then fly temptation, youth; resist, refrain!
 Nor let me preach for ever and in vain!

SAMUEL ROGERS

(1763 – 1855)

SAMUEL ROGERS was born at Stoke Newington on 30th July, 1763. His father, a prominent Liberal and dissenter, was a business man and

afterwards a banker. He was educated at schools at Hackney and Stoke Newington, and entered his father's bank. He began

to write poetry at an early age, his models being Dryden, Milton, and Gray. At the age of twenty-three he published anonymously *An Ode to Superstition, with some other Poems*. In 1792 he published his best-known poem, *The Pleasures of Memory*, though memory is, or should be, one of the least of the pleasures of a young man in his twenties. It appeared during what may be termed a poetical interregnum; had it appeared ten years earlier or ten years later it might have enjoyed a merely moderate success. As it was, it became widely popular; it may rank as the swan-song of the poetic diction of the eighteenth century. It is written in good taste, and is smooth and pleasing, but deficient in the more positive virtues of poetry. The death of Rogers's father made him a rich man at the age of thirty; he became a sleeping partner in the bank, and laid himself out to be a leader of literary and artistic society in London. He was a powerful influence in London for sixty years, and his breakfasts and dinners were as celebrated as his poems. He had a caustic tongue but a kind heart, and used his wealth, power, and influence to help struggling men of letters; not seldom he acted as peacemaker between members of the *genus irritabile* who had quarrelled. He adorned his house with works of art of the best kind, and became a notable connoisseur. He wrote little but polished that little fastidiously. He published a fragmentary epic, *Columbus*, in 1810; in 1814 *Jacqueline* appeared, bound up, oddly enough, with Byron's *Lara*. *Human Life*, his best poem, appeared in 1819; Part I of *Italy* appeared

anonymously in 1822; Part II appeared, with the author's name on the title page, in 1828. *Italy* was at first a failure; in 1830 he published a large edition of it beautifully illustrated with engravings after drawings made for the purpose by Stothard, Turner, and others. In 1834 he published his earlier poems in another volume, illustrated in the same manner. The illustrated editions of his poems sold well, and he recovered the large sum (£7000) which he had expended on their production. They are still valued mainly for their engravings. As Pope said of Quarles,

the pictures for the page atone,
And Quarles is saved by beauties not
his own.

As a matter of fact *Italy*, parts of which are in prose, is by no means a contemptible performance.

The remainder of his long life was undisturbed, save by a sensational bank robbery in 1844, and an accident, in which he broke his leg. When Wordsworth died, he was offered the Laureateship, but declined it on the score of his great age; whereupon Tennyson was appointed to it. He died on 18th December, 1855, and was buried in Hornsey churchyard. His art collections sold for £50,000.

Rogers was, in many respects, most fortunate in the circumstances of his life. Length of days was in his right hand, and in his left hand riches and honour. His poetical gifts were small, but he made the most of them, and his poems are pleasing examples of what cultivation will do for an exiguous Muse.

The figure of the "ugly little man, a wrinkled Mæcenæ, in a brown coat" stands prominently in the literary history of the first half of the nineteenth century. His reputation for biting wit still remains; he said of himself: "They tell me I say ill-natured things. I have a very weak voice: if I did not say ill-natured things, no one would hear what I said." Like Gilbert's

King Gama, he might have said:

I love my fellow-creatures—I do all
the good I can.

Yet everybody says I'm such a disagreeable man!

And I can't think why!

[P. W. Clayden, *The early Life of Samuel Rogers; Rogers and his Contemporaries*; R. E. Roberts, *Samuel Rogers and his Circle*.]

From "The Pleasures of Memory"

PART II

Sweet Memory, wafted by thy gentle gale,
Oft up the stream of Time I turn my sail,
To view the fairy-haunts of long-lost hours,
Blest with far greener shades, far fresher flowers.

Ages and climes remote to Thee impart
What charms in Genius and refines in Art;
Thee, in whose hands the keys of Science dwell,
The pensive portress of her holy cell;
Whose constant vigils chase the chilling damp
Oblivion steals upon her vestal-lamp.

They in their glorious course the guides of Youth,
Whose language breathed the eloquence of Truth,
Whose life, beyond preceptive wisdom, taught
The great in conduct, and the pure in thought;
These still exist, by Thee to Fame consigned,
Still speak and act, the models of mankind.

From Thee gay Hope her airy colouring draws,
And Fancy's flights are subject to thy laws.
From Thee that bosom-spring of rapture flows,
Which only Virtue, tranquil Virtue, knows.

When Joy's bright sun has shed his evening-ray,
And Hope's delusive meteors cease to play;
When clouds on clouds the smiling prospect close,
Still thro' the gloom thy star serenely glows;
Like yon fair orb, she gilds the brow of night
With the mild magic of reflected light.

The beauteous maid, who bids the world adieu,
Oft of that world will snatch a fond review;
Oft at the shrine neglect her beads, to trace

Some social scene, some dear, familiar face:
And ere, with iron-tongue, the vesper-bell
Bursts thro' the cypress-walk, the convent-cell,
Oft will her warm and wayward heart revive,
To love and joy still tremblingly alive;
The whispered vow, the chaste caress prolong,
Weave the light dance and swell the choral song;
With rapt ear drink the enchanting serenade,
And, as it melts along the moonlight-glade,
To each soft note return as soft a sigh,
And bless the youth that bids her slumbers fly.

But not till Time has calmed the ruffled breast,
Are these fond dreams of happiness confest.
Not till the rushing winds forget to rave,
Is Heaven's sweet smile reflected on the wave.

From Guinea's coast pursue the lessening sail,
And catch the sounds that sadden every gale.
Tell, if thou canst, the sum of sorrows there;
Mark the fixed gaze, the wild and frenzied glare,
The racks of thought, and freezings of despair!
But pause not then—beyond the western wave,
Go, see the captive bartered as a slave!
Crushed till his high, heroic spirit bleeds,
And from his nerveless frame indignantly recedes.

Yet here, even here, with pleasures long resigned,
Lo! MEMORY bursts the twilight of the mind.
Her dear delusions sooth his sinking soul,
When the rude scourge assumes its base controul;
And o'er Futurity's blank page diffuse,
The full reflection of her vivid hues.
'Tis but to die, and then, to weep no more,
Then will he wake on Congo's distant shore;
Beneath his plantain's ancient shade renew
The simple transports that with freedom flew;
Catch the cool breeze that musky Evening blows,
And quaff the palm's rich nectar as it glows;
The oral tale of elder time rehearse,
And chant the rude, traditionary verse
With those, the loved companions of his youth,
When life was luxury, and friendship truth.

APPENDIX

GEORGE PSALMANAZAR (?1679-1763), whose real name is unknown, was born of Roman Catholic parents in the south of France. He was educated at a Jesuit college, a Dominican school, and an unidentified university. He became a mendicant student, and, being possessed by a morbid desire for notoriety, assumed the character of a Japanese convert to Christianity. He was patronized by a Scottish clergyman named Innes, who, fully aware of the imposture, thought he might make use of it to procure his own ecclesiastical advancement. He brought the "convert", who now represented himself as a native of Formosa, to England, and was eventually appointed chaplain-general to the English forces in Portugal. Psalmanazar was equal to the occasion. He invented an alphabet, a new language, grammar and all, and a new religion. He translated the Church of England catechism into "Formosan", at the request of the Bishop of London. He was sent, by public subscription, to the far-famed foundation of Christ Church, Oxford. In 1704 he published *An Historical and Geographical Description of Formosa, an Island subject to the Emperor of Japan* (actually it belonged to China until 1895). Disbelievers in him, however, grew in

numbers; the novelty of his pretensions wore off; he was ridiculed in *The Spectator*; and became, in turn, a tutor, an orderly-room clerk, a fan-painter, and a literary hack. In the last-named capacity he had a large share in compiling *The Universal History*. In 1728 he repented of his misdeeds, and afterwards lived an exemplary life, diversified by opium-eating. He gained the enthusiastic admiration of Dr. Johnson. His *Autobiography*, published after his death, expresses great penitence for his deceptions. His wholesale fabrications make those of Chatterton and Ireland appear quite puny.

SUSANNAH CENTLIVRE (?1667-1723), whose maiden name was Freeman, was the daughter of a Lincolnshire gentleman, but was born in Ireland. In 1706 she married Joseph Centlivre, Queen Anne's principal cook, whose duties, apparently, were advisory rather than executive. A certain element of myth surrounds the earlier years of her life; the two previous marriages of which her biographers speak may have been marriages *de facto* rather than *de iure*; nor is it probable that she masqueraded as a youth and resided at St. John's College, Cambridge. She was both actress and playwright, but was

more successful in the latter capacity. Her earliest play, *The Perjur'd Husband*, was acted in 1700. She wrote in all nineteen plays, fifteen of which were acted. The best of them were *The Gamester* (1705), *The Busy Body* (1709), and *A Bold Stroke for a Wife* (1718). The last-named play is the origin of the expression "The real Simon Pure". Her plays, some of which had a long life on the boards, are lively and not over-decent; some of their fame was due to their decided Whig bias.

MARY DE LA RIVIERE MANLEY (1663-1724) was the daughter of the cavalier Sir Roger Manley, who was commander-in-chief of the forces in Jersey from 1667 to 1674. After his death she went through the form of marriage with a cousin of the same name, who had a wife living. He deserted her three years later, and she took to literature for a livelihood. Her tragedy *The Royal Mischief* had some success; but she is remembered mainly on account of *Secret Memoirs and Manners of Several Persons of Quality of both Sexes. From the New Atalantis* (1709). This famous book, which had several sequels, is a political *chronique scandaleuse* masquerading as a romance, and was intended to discredit the Whig politicians of the day. When the Tories were in power she prospered; she succeeded Swift as editor of *The Examiner* in 1711. Her private life does not bear close scrutiny; but she was a journalist of no mean ability, though woefully lacking in elementary knowledge of history and orthography. *Atalantis* was, of course, a mistaken form of *Atlantis*.

ANDREW FLETCHER OF SALTOUN (1655-1716) was more notable as a politician than as a man of letters. He was a bitter and fearless opponent of Lauderdale; and threw in his lot with Monmouth and accompanied him on his expedition to England, but left him after having shot a fellow-rebel dead in a quarrel about a horse. He fled to Spain, fought the Turks in Hungary, and returned to Scotland at the Revolution. He was mainly instrumental in securing the passing of the Act of Security in 1704, and vehemently opposed the Union in 1707. After the Act of Union had been passed, he retired from public life, and devoted himself to making improvements in the manufacture of barley. His writings include *A Discourse of Government relating to Militias*, *Two Discourses on the affairs of Scotland* (one contains his proposal to turn beggars into serfs), and *An Account of a Conversation Concerning a Right Regulation of Governments for the Common Good of Mankind*. In the last named occurs the often misquoted and misinterpreted apophthegm about the ballads and the laws of a nation, which is Fletcher's chief title to literary fame. All his writings are in English, not Scots, in spite of his antipathy to the southern kingdom.

[G. W. T. Omond, *Fletcher of Saltoun*.]

ANTHONY HAMILTON (?1646-1720), a cadet of the Abercorn family, was one of Charles II's courtiers. He was appointed Governor of Limerick in 1685, and commanded a regiment of dragoons at the battles of Newton Butler and the Boyne. Afterwards he

accompanied James to France. He became practically a Frenchman, and wrote all his works in French. The most famous of them is his life of his brother-in-law, the Comte de Grammont (1621-1707). Its French title page admirably epitomizes its contents—*Mémoires de la Vie du Comte de Grammont, Contenant particulièrement l'Histoire Amoureuse de la Cour d'Angleterre sous le Règne de Charles II.* It is the chief source of our knowledge of the dissipations of the Merry Monarch and his courtiers; it is highly entertaining but not entirely trustworthy. It was published, nominally at Cologne, actually in Holland, in 1713, and was inadequately translated into English by Abel Boyer in 1714. It ranks as an English classic though, like *Utopia* and *Vathek*, it originally appeared in another language. Hamilton's share in it is much greater than Grammont's, though he professes that he merely holds the pen.

[Ruth Clark, *Anthony Hamilton: his Life, Work, and Family.*]

EUSTACE BUDGELL (1686-1737), Addison's first cousin once removed, was Addison's satellite both in his literary and his public career. He contributed thirty-seven papers to *The Spectator*, and obtained from his cousin several valuable appointments in Ireland, losing them through his own folly. After Addison's death, misfortunes multiplied upon him. He lost a fortune in the South Sea Bubble; became a victim of persecutory paranoia; was guilty of attempting a fraud in connexion with the will of Matthew Tindal, the deist; and, finally, filled his pockets with stones and drowned himself in the Thames.

In his last years he degenerated into a Grub Street hack; his weekly paper *The Bee* (1733-1735) is of no value.

AMBROSE PHILIPS (1675-1749) was educated at Shrewsbury and at St. John's College, Cambridge, where he was elected a fellow in 1699. His *Pastorals* appeared in 1709 in Tonson's *Miscellany*, and aroused the enmity of Pope, with whom he ever afterwards "lived in a perpetual reciprocation of malevolence", to use Johnson's phrase. His *Distressed Mother* (1712), a mere adaptation of Racine's *Andromaque*, was puffed and applauded into some success by his fellow-Whigs. His best because his least ambitious poems are the poetical trifles which won for him the nickname of "Namby Pamby", coined by Henry Carey (q.v.) and circulated by Pope. In them, as Johnson says, "he paid his court to all ages and characters, from Walpole the steerer of the realm, to Miss Pulteney in the nursery". He ended his days as an Irish official.

THOMAS TICKELL (1686-1740) was educated at Queen's College, Oxford, where he was elected a fellow in 1710. His success in literature and life was mainly due to Addison, whose chief satellite and literary executor he was. His translation of the first book of the *Iliad*, which appeared at the same moment as Pope's, was the cause of the quarrel between Pope and Addison. Even the most thorough-going party-men could not prefer the Whig to the Tory rendering. He went with Addison to Ireland

in 1714, and when Addison became Secretary of State Tickell became Under-Secretary. In 1724 he was appointed secretary to the lords justices in Ireland, a post he held till his death. His one good poem is his *Elegy on the Death of Mr. Addison*, which appeared in his edition of Addison's Works (four vols., 1721). His pinchbeck ballad *Colin and Lucy*, and his more ambitious *Kensington Gardens*, were at one time much admired.

COLLEY CIBBER (1671-1757), the son of a well-known Danish sculptor, was educated at Grantham School, and went on the stage in 1690. After a period of obscurity, he became known as a useful playwright and an accomplished actor of eccentric characters. His first play, *Love's Last Shift*, appeared in 1696. He wrote some thirty dramatic pieces, many of which are adaptations, most of which are lively, and none of which has literary as distinguished from dramatic merit. *The Careless Husband* (1704) and *The Non-juror* (1718), an adaptation of Molière's *Tartuffe*, are among the best of them. As manager of Drury Lane he played a leading part in the theatrical life of his day. In 1730 he was appointed Poet Laureate, in which capacity he wrote execrable official odes. He incurred the enmity of Pope, who made him the hero in the 1742 edition of *The Dunciad*, that poem which exemplifies as much as it satirizes dullness. Cibber was by no means dull; his plays are amusing; he is one of the best of English dramatic critics, and his autobiography (*Apology for the Life of Colley Cibber, Comedian*, 1740)

is among the best autobiographies in the language.

SIR RICHARD BLACKMORE (*d.* 1729) was educated at Westminster and at St. Edmund Hall, Oxford, where he graduated B.A. in 1674 and M.A. in 1676. He was, for a time, a schoolmaster, but abandoned that profession in favour of medicine, and took the degree of M.D. at Padua. In 1695 he published *Prince Arthur*, an epic in ten books. In 1697, being a prominent Whig, he was appointed physician-in-ordinary to King William, and was knighted. His other preposterous epics are *King Arthur* (1697), *Eliza* (1705), *The Nature of Man* (1711), *Creation* (1712), *Redemption* (1722), and *Alfred* (1723). Blackmore is a classic example of the *furor poeticus*. He did much of his writing in his carriage, while on his rounds. He was ridiculed by all the wits, including Tom Brown and Pope; but Dennis compared him with Lucretius to the disadvantage of the latter, and Johnson placed him "among the first favourites of the English Muse". His medical treatises on the plague, the spleen, &c., do not rank as literature; nor, indeed, do his portentous heroic poems.

FRANCIS ATTERBURY (1662-1732) was educated at Westminster, under Busby, and at Christ Church, Oxford. He was always a great controversialist, and wrote much of what appeared under Boyle's name in the *Phalaris* controversy (see *Bentley, Richard*), being the leader of "those who tried what Wit could perform in opposition to Learning, on a question which

Learning only could decide". He was more successful in championing the rights of convocations. He became Archdeacon of Totnes in 1701, Dean of Carlisle in 1704, Dean of Christ Church in 1712, and Bishop of Rochester in 1713. He was the leader of the High Church party, and was coldly received by George I. He became involved in Jacobite conspiracies, was committed to the Tower in 1722, and deprived of his offices and banished. He ended his days in France, in the service of the Pretender. Swift, Pope, and Arbuthnot were his intimate friends. His controversial writings are able but superficial; his sermons have merit, but not merit of the highest kind.

[H. C. Beeching, *Francis Atterbury*.]

JOHN TOLAND (1670-1722), whose baptismal names, Junius Janus, were wisely set aside by his schoolmaster, was born in County Derry, and was converted from Roman Catholicism at the age of sixteen. He entered Glasgow University in 1687, graduated M.A. at Edinburgh in 1690, and afterwards studied theology at Leyden and Oxford. In 1696 he published his best-known book, *Christianity not Mysterious*, which is usually reckoned the earliest contribution to the deistic controversy, though Toland was a free-thinker rather than a deist, and in later life adopted pantheistic views. His book was burnt by the hangman at Dublin in 1697, and fluttered the orthodox dove-cots in England also. Toland had to earn a livelihood by becoming a political hack-writer; none of his other writings is as important

as his earliest. In *Amyntor* (1699) he raised the question of the authenticity of the Gospels, canonical and apocryphal.

ANTHONY COLLINS (1676-1729) was educated at Eton and King's College, Cambridge. He was comfortably off, and was justice of the peace and deputy-lieutenant for Middlesex and for Essex. He was a friend and follower of Locke, who described him as a man who had "an estate in the country, a library in town, and friends everywhere". He was a deist and a necessitarian. His chief works are *An Essay concerning the Use of Reason* (1707), *Priestcraft in Perfection* (1709), *A Discourse of Free Thinking* (1713), *A Philosophical Enquiry concerning Human Liberty* (1715), and *A Discourse on the Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion* (1724). The last of these books generated no fewer than thirty-five replies, but *A Discourse of Free Thinking* was the most celebrated of his writings. It was attacked by Bentley, who convicted Collins of inaccuracy in small points of scholarship, and ironically epitomized by Swift. Collins was not a great writer or thinker, but was a courteous controversialist and a man of no mean ability.

MATTHEW TINDAL (?1657-1733) was educated at Lincoln and Exeter Colleges, Oxford, was elected a fellow of All Souls in 1678, and graduated D.C.L. in 1685. He managed to retain his fellowship, though he was not popular among the orthodox. His conversion to Roman Catholicism coincided conveniently with the reign of James

II. After the Revolution he became an advocate at Doctors' Commons. In 1706 he published a treatise entitled *The Rights of the Christian Church*, attacking hierarchical supremacy. It evoked twenty replies, and was burnt by the common hangman. In 1730 he published his most famous book, *Christianity as old as the Creation, or the Gospel a Republication of the Religion of Nature*, in which he maintains that there has been no revelation distinct from the interval revelation in the hearts of mankind. It went into its fourth edition in three years, and was nicknamed "The Deist's Bible". It was probably the most important book published by the deistical party.

SAMUEL CLARKE (1675-1729) was born at Norwich, and educated at Caius College, Cambridge. He became chaplain to the Bishop of Norwich, replied to Toland's *Amyntor*, and issued a paraphrase of the Gospels. In 1704 and 1705 he delivered the Boyle Lectures at Oxford, on *The Being and Attributes of God*, and on *The Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion*. In 1712 he published his *Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity*, which became a subject of much controversy and of complaint in the Lower House of Convocation. His chief subsequent productions were his discussions with Leibnitz and Collins on the freedom of the will, and a considerable number of sermons. His philosophic fame rests on his *a priori* demonstration of the existence of God, and his opposition to Hobbes, Spinoza, Locke, Leibnitz, and others. His theological position was that of a semi-Arian. It was

said of him that he would have been Archbishop of Canterbury if he had been a Christian.

RICHARD SAVAGE (*d.* 1743) is of less importance as a poet than as a "biographee". His *Life* was written by Johnson, who knew him intimately, in 1744, and was afterwards, in spite of its disproportionate length, included in *The Lives of the English Poets* (1779-1781). It is one of the best biographies in the language, though, as it is based upon Savage's own statements, it probably contains more fiction than fact. Savage was almost certainly of humble origin, but from 1718 onwards he claimed to be the illegitimate son of Earl Rivers and the Countess of Macclesfield. Such a son was born in 1697, but probably died in infancy. Savage was a disreputable adventurer; he was sentenced to death for murder, but was begged off by the Countess of Hertford. His chief poems are *The Bastard* (1728) and *The Wanderer* (1729). His dramatic writings include *Love in a Veil* and *Sir Thomas Overbury*. The merit of his writings is very slight. He was anxious to become Poet Laureate in 1730, when Eusden died, but Cibber was appointed over his head, so he created himself "Volunteer Laureate", and presented the queen with an annual ode, for which he received a pension of £50. In his last years his dissipated habits reduced him to the utmost want and estranged his friends, and he died in a debtors' prison in Bristol. His fame is due to Johnson's biography, to the mystery surrounding his birth, and to the fact that "the roses and raptures of vice" provide more entertaining

material for biographies than "the lilies and languors of virtue".

[S. V. Makower, *Richard Savage, a Mystery in Biography.*]

WILLIAM LAW (1686-1761), the son of a grocer, was born at King's Cliffe, Northamptonshire, and educated at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, where he graduated B.A. in 1708 and M.A. in 1712. He was elected to a fellowship, which he was obliged to vacate in 1714, as he declined to take the oath of allegiance to George I. He eventually became tutor to Gibbon's father, and spiritual director of the whole family. In 1740 he retired to King's Cliffe, where, with Gibbon's aunt and a widow named Hutcheson, he lived a life of contemplation and active charity for twenty-one years. He contributed three admirable letters to the Bangorian controversy, and combated the doctrines of Mandeville (q.v.) and of Tindal (q.v.). His *Practical Treatise on Christian Perfection* (1726) was enthusiastically received; even more popular was his *Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life* (1728), which profoundly influenced the views of the early Methodists and evangelicals. About 1734 he became acquainted with the writings of Jacob Boehme, and adopted mystical views. His chief mystical writings are *An Appeal to all that Doubt* (1740) and *The Way to Divine Knowledge* (1752). He wrote in an attractive manner; his *Serious Call* was respected by Gibbon and turned Johnson's thoughts to religion.

[J. H. Overton, *William Law, Nonjuror and Mystic.*]

LEWIS THEOBALD (1688-1744), the

son of an attorney, was born at Sittingbourne, in Kent, and bred to his father's profession, which he soon deserted for literature. He became a hack-writer, and produced many translations from the Greek, some poems, and a large number of dramatic pieces—tragedies, operas, masques, and pantomimes. As a playwright he was not merely undistinguished but positively dishonest. His *Perfidious Brother* was shamelessly plagiarized from a London watch-maker; the aptly-named *Double Falsehood* (1728), produced by him as the work of Shakespeare, was almost certainly his own unaided work. His fame is due to his editorial labours upon the text of Shakespeare. He criticized Pope's edition (1725) in his *Shakespeare Restored* (1726), thereby winning for himself the throne of dullness in the first version of *The Dunciad* (1728). His own edition of Shakespeare appeared in 1734. He was a painstaking and scholarly editor, and made many brilliant emendations, of which one ("a' babbled of green fields") has been called the best emendation in ancient or modern literature. His services to Shakespeare won him the titles of "splendid-emendax" and "the Porson of Shakespearean Critics".

[R. F. Jones, *Lewis Theobald.*]

JOSEPH BUTLER (1692-1752), the son of a retired draper, was born at Wantage, Berkshire. He was brought up a dissenter, and educated for the dissenting ministry, but became a member of the Established Church at the age of twenty-two, and went to Oriel College, Oxford, where he gradu-

ated B.A. in 1718, taking holy orders in the same year. The sermons which he delivered as preacher at the Rolls Chapel, an appointment he held from 1719 to 1726, still hold a high place in ethical literature. His principal work, however, is his *Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed, to the Constitution and Course of Nature* (1736). This book was directed against the deists, and is the only work of permanent interest evoked by the once-famous deistic controversy. Its arguments are well arranged, but its style is dry and tough. Butler was made Bishop of Bristol in 1738, Dean of St. Paul's in 1740, and was translated to Durham in 1750.

JOHN BYROM (1692-1763), the son of a prosperous Manchester merchant, was born near Manchester, and educated at Merchant Taylors' and at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he graduated B.A. in 1712 and M.A. in 1715, being elected fellow in 1714. For some time he studied medicine, but his chief means of livelihood for many years, till he inherited the family estates in 1740, was teaching shorthand on an elegant but insufficiently rapid system invented by himself. He was an admirer of Law, some of whose mystical writings he versified, and was friendly with many of the most eminent men of his time. His poems (collected in 1773) were chiefly humorous and satirical; he had a remarkable gift of rhyming, but no patience for pruning and polishing. His epigram on Handel and Bononcini (often misattributed to Swift) is well known; his hymn *Christians, awake!* is still sung. His best epigram is that in which he

artfully displays his strong Jacobitism:

God bless the King—I mean the
faith's defender!
God bless (no harm in blessing!) the
Pretender!
But who pretender is or who is king,
God bless us all! that's quite another
thing.

WILLIAM SOMERVILLE (1675-1742), the son of a Warwickshire squire, was educated at Winchester and New College, Oxford. When he was thirty years of age he succeeded to the family estate, and settled down to the life of a country gentleman; he was an exemplary magistrate and an ardent devotee of field sports. He wrote a little in his earlier years, but produced no work of importance until advancing age curtailed his hunting activities. His principal poem, *The Chace*, a blank-verse poem on hunting in four books, appeared in 1735. His other poems include *Field Sports* (1742), a kind of supplement to his chief poem; *Hobbinol*, a not quite successful burlesque; and some Fables and Occasional Poems. *The Chace* is an excellent poem of its kind, as its author had a more intimate knowledge of his subject than is usually possessed by didactic poets; moreover, as Johnson says, "he writes very well for a gentleman". The poem was admired by Mr. Jorrocks, and is still remembered by some of Mr. Jorrocks's admirers.

GEORGE LILLO (1693-1739) was the son of a Dutch jeweller and his English wife. He was born in London, and followed his father's trade, becoming comfortably prosperous. His first dramatic piece was

a feeble opera entitled *Silvia* (1730). His famous *bourgeois* tragedy, *The London Merchant, or The History of George Barnwell*, was produced in Drury Lane in 1731. It is written in prose, which occasionally lapses into unintentional blank-verse. Its success was instantaneous and lasting; for many years it was acted on public holidays, as its morality (which is akin to that of Hogarth) was supposed to be beneficial to apprentices. *The Christian Hero* (1735), a blank-verse play based on the story of Scanderbeg, was not a success; *Fatal Curiosity* (1736), the story of which is founded upon that of a murder which was committed in Cornwall in 1618, is Lillo's best play, and has the power of arousing pity and terror. His other plays include *Marina*, an adaptation of *Pericles*, and an adaptation of the pseudo-Shakespearean *Arden of Feversham*. Lillo was appreciated by Fielding on account of his realism; his influence was great and extended to the Continent, being obvious in the works of Diderot and Lessing. His plays, however, scarcely rank as literature.

DAVID MALLET (?1705-1765), whose original name was Malloch, altered it on account of the impossibility of getting it correctly pronounced in England. He was born near Crieff, educated at Edinburgh University, where he met James Thomson, and acted for a time as tutor to the sons of the Duke of Montrose. He was Bolingbroke's literary executor, vilified Pope's memory, and accepted £1000 left to him by the Duchess of Marlborough on condition that he should write her husband's life, which he

did not do. Englishmen disliked him as a Scot, Scots disliked him as a renegade, and everyone disliked him for his religious views or absence of views. His perfunctory *Life of Bacon* and his plays (*Eurydice*, *Mustapha*, &c.) are forgotten; he is remembered as the author of *William and Margaret*, a famous ballad, and as joint author (with Thomson) of the masque *Alfred*, and therefore possibly the author of *Rule, Britannia!*

ISAAC HAWKINS BROWNE (1705-1760), the son of the vicar of Burton-on-Trent, was born there and educated at Westminster and Trinity College, Cambridge. He was a barrister of Lincoln's Inn, but did not practise. He was a mute member of Parliament for ten years, but had a great reputation as a conversationalist, and was considered by Johnson "one of the first wits of this country". There is merit in his English poem *Design and Beauty* and his Latin poem *De Animi Immortalitate*, but his *Pipe of Tobacco* (1736), a collection of six delightful parodies, was one of the first examples in English of the parodist's art, and still retains its original sparkle. The authors parodied were all still alive, the laureate Cibber, Ambrose Philips, Thomson, Young, Pope, and Swift. Browne's, like all good parodies, are both a criticism and an appreciation of the author who is mimicked.

MATTHEW GREEN (1696-1737) was apparently a member of a Quaker family, but abandoned the severe tenets of his relatives in favour of a type of Epicurean

philosophy. Little else is known about his life. He held a place in the custom-house, like his apostolic namesake, and had a reputation as a wit and poet. His one poem of note, *The Spleen*, was posthumously published in 1737. Its title and date suggest a heavy didactic poem; as a matter of fact, it is a lively, witty, and shrewd plea for cheerfulness, exercise, and quiet content, admirably written in octosyllabics, which resemble those of Swift rather than those of Butler, but which are better than any of Swift's.

ROBERT BLAIR (1699-1746), the son of a minister, was born in Edinburgh, and educated at Edinburgh University and in Holland. In 1731 he was ordained minister of Athelstaneford, Haddington, where he lived a quiet life, studying botany and reading poetry. His single poem, *The Grave*, was published in 1743, after some negotiations in which Dr. Watts took part. It is a blank-verse poem, a little less than eight hundred lines in length. It became popular at once, and retained its popularity for long, especially amongst those who considered gloominess a virtue in poetry. Its blank-verse is freely handled, resembling that of some of the dramatists (e.g. Massinger) more than that of Milton. It is one of the best of mortuary poems. An edition illustrated by Blake (q.v.) appeared in 1808.

RICHARD GLOVER (1712-1785), the son of a Hamburg merchant, was born in London, educated at Cheam, and entered his father's business. He found time to write two colossal epics, *Leonidas* (1737)

and *The Athenaid*, posthumously published in 1787. The former was originally in nine books, but was expanded to the statutory twelve in 1770; the latter was in thirty books, or two and a half times the statutory number. Both are quite unreadable, but *Leonidas* had an undercurrent of political allusion, and was popular with the Prince of Wales's party. Glover's tragedies, *Boadicea*, *Medea*, and *Jason*, are utterly forgotten, but his spirited ballad *Admiral Hosier's Ghost* has sufficient merit to keep it alive.

JOHN ARMSTRONG (1709-1779) was born at Castleton, Roxburghshire, where his father was parish minister. He was educated at Edinburgh University, where he graduated M.D. in 1732. He practised medicine, not very successfully, in London. He was a friend and poetical disciple of Thomson, who was also a Roxburghshire man. His anonymous *Economy of Love* (1736) did his poetical reputation no good, while it hampered his professional career. His principal poem, *The Art of Preserving Health*, a didactic poem in four books, appeared in 1744. It is somewhat stiff and tedious, but is not without passages of merit. In 1746 he became physician to a hospital for soldiers, and in 1760 he was appointed physician to the army in Germany. His prose writings are good; in poetry he ranks as Thomson's chief follower.

SARAH FIELDING (1710-1768), sister of Henry Fielding (q.v.), was a fairly prolific miscellaneous writer, publishing several novels and some translations from the Greek. Her first and best novel is

The Adventures of David Simple, containing an Account of his Travels through the Cities of London and Westminster in the Search of a real Friend, which was published between 1744 and 1752, with a preface by her brother. Her inevitable lack of knowledge of the world disqualified her for writing a first-class picaresque novel, but she displays on occasion not a little of the family sense of humour. Her brother said loyally that "some of her touches might have done honour to the pencil of the immortal Shakespeare"; and her friend Richardson contrasted favourably her knowledge of "the finer springs and movements of the inside" of the human heart with her brother's knowledge of the outside only. It is probable that Richardson was paraphrasing a criticism of Johnson's.

CHARLOTTE LENNOX (1720-1804) was the daughter of Colonel James Ramsay, Lieutenant-Governor of New York, where she was born. She came to England at the age of fifteen, was an unsuccessful actress, married, and became a miscellaneous writer. She was patronized and somewhat spoilt by Dr. Johnson; but injured her reputation as a woman-of-letters by a foolish and injudicious attack on Shakespeare, which caused her well-written comedy *The Sister* to be hooted off the stage in 1769. Her novel *The Life of Harriot Stuart* (1751) had some success; but her best work by far is *The Female Quixote: or, the Adventures of Arabella* (1752). It is an amusing though somewhat long-winded satire upon a young lady who, nurtured upon the romances of Mademoiselle de

Scudéry, imagines that she is living in the world which they depict.

WILLIAM WARBURTON (1698-1779) was born at Newark, where his father was town clerk. He was articled to an attorney, but relinquished this profession and was ordained in 1723. In 1736 appeared his first important work, *The Alliance between Church and State*, which brought him into favourable notice at court; his principal work, *The Divine Legation of Moses*, appeared in 1737 and 1741. It was never completed. Its paradoxical orthodoxy offended many. In 1739 Warburton published a *Vindication* of Pope's *Essay on Man*, and thereby won Pope's friendship. He became the accepted commentator on Pope, and was his literary executor, Johnson estimating the profits of the executorship at £4000. His unsatisfactory edition of Shakespeare appeared in 1747. Warburton was a great controversialist; his literary manners were atrocious; he has left behind him the reputation of being extremely arrogant, and of combining a certain amount of ill-digested learning with a considerable amount of brutal ignorance. He married the niece of Ralph Allen, the original of Squire Allworthy, and accordingly rose steadily in his sacred profession, becoming Bishop of Gloucester in 1759.

JOHN HOME (1722-1808) was born at Leith, where his father was town clerk. He was educated at Leith Grammar School and at Edinburgh University, where he graduated M.A. in 1742. He volunteered to serve against Prince

Charles, and was taken prisoner at Falkirk, but managed to escape. In 1747 he succeeded Robert Blair (q.v.) as minister of Athelstaneford, Haddington. His tragedy of *Douglas* was performed at Edinburgh in 1756 and at Covent Garden (with Peg Woffington in the cast) in 1757, and attained great popularity. The Church authorities, however, were scandalized, and he prudently resigned his charge. He became private secretary to Bute and tutor to the Prince of Wales, and was rewarded with a pension and a sinecure. His other tragedies (*Agis*, *The Siege of Aquileia*, *The Fatal Discovery*, *Alonzo*, and *Alfred*) are quite worthless; *Douglas* is nearly so; its declamatory speeches are without charm for modern readers. It is based on the old ballad of *Gil Morrice*. Home was hailed by his contemporaries, especially those who were compatriots, as Shakespeare's equal or superior.

SAMUEL FOOTE (1720-1777), whose father was a commissioner of the Prize Office, was born at Truro, educated at Worcester College, Oxford, and entered the Temple. Having disencumbered himself of a considerable fortune, he turned his attention to the stage. In 1747 he opened the theatre in Haymarket with a dramatic piece which he entitled *The Diversions of the Morning*. It consisted of some very humorous imitations of well-known characters, in detached scenes, written by Foote, who always took the leading parts himself. He had a gift for mimicry almost amounting to genius. He did not obtain a patent for the Haymarket until 1766, when it was granted to him as compensa-

tion for the loss of a leg in a riding accident. Among his numerous plays, above twenty in number, are *The Liar*, *The Minor*, *The Mayor of Garratt*, and *The Devil on Two Sticks*. They are lively, but have only slight literary merit. Much of their success when produced was due to Foote's personality and to timely "gagging"; but their humour, if farcical, is wholesome. Foote conceived the Gilbertian idea of presenting one of his farces (*The Minor*) to the Archbishop of Canterbury for approval; but the judicious Secker returned it unread.

[Percy Fitzgerald, *Samuel Foote, a Biography*.]

WILLIAM MASON (1724-1797), the son of a clergyman, was born in Hull, and educated at St. John's College, Cambridge. In 1749 he was elected fellow of Pembroke, thanks to his friendship with Gray. He took holy orders, and eventually became king's chaplain and Canon of York. His stilted dramatic poems *Elfrida* (1752) and *Caractacus* (1759), his opera *Sappho*, and his bombastic odes are now forgotten; he is remembered as Gray's friend, literary executor, and biographer. His *Life and Letters of Gray* (1774) introduced a new method of writing biographies, blending, as it did, Gray's letters with Mason's narrative. Boswell took this book as his model when writing his incomparably better *Life of Johnson*.

GEORGE, FIRST BARON LYTTLETON (1709-1773), the son of a Worcestershire baronet, was educated at Eton and Christ Church, Oxford, and went for the customary

grand tour. In 1735 he was elected M.P. for Okehampton. His parliamentary career was distinguished, but owed its distinction to his family connexions rather than to his personal ability. He was Chancellor of the Exchequer for a short time in 1756, and was raised to the peerage when he resigned. He wrote both prose and verse; his best poem was his *Monody* on the death of his wife; his best prose work his *Dialogues of the Dead* (1760). His laborious *History of the Life of Henry II*, much of which was set up in type three or four times before publication, was a failure. Lyttelton shone as a patron rather than as a man-of-letters; he befriended Pope, he was Thomson's literary executor, and *Tom Jones* was dedicated to him.

RICHARD HURD (1720-1808), the son of a Staffordshire farmer, was educated at Emmanuel College, Cambridge. He was elected to a fellowship, took holy orders, and became preacher at Lincoln's Inn (1765), Archdeacon of Gloucester (1767), Bishop of Lichfield (1774), and Bishop of Worcester (1781). He was George III's favourite bishop, and refused the primacy in 1783. In his younger days he acted as jackal to Warburton (q.v.), whom he assisted in some of his controversies. His *Moral and Political Dialogues* (1759) and his *Letters on Chivalry and Romance* (1762) show some ability; the latter assisted or at any rate foreshadowed the rise of the Romantic movement. Hurd was no mean critic, but an arrogant and unattractive man. His nickname was "the beauty of holiness".

GEORGE WHITEFIELD (1714-1770), the son of an innkeeper, was born at Gloucester, and educated at St. Mary de Crypt School there and at Pembroke College, Oxford. He was ordained deacon in 1736, and became very popular as a preacher. He differed with Wesley over certain points of doctrine, and eventually became the leader of the Calvinistic Methodists. He visited America no fewer than seven times, and was perpetually travelling in Great Britain and Ireland in the course of his evangelistic labours. He was a superb orator, and could touch the hearts of the learned, the ignorant, and the infidel alike. His writings (*Journals*, &c.) do not sustain his reputation and cannot be ranked as more than commonplace; but he was one of the greatest spiritual influences of his century.

ELIZABETH CARTER (1717-1806), daughter of the perpetual curate of Deal Chapel, was educated by her father, and, though slow to learn at first, eventually learned Latin, Greek, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Hebrew, and Arabic. She was a leading "blue-stocking" and a friend of Dr. Johnson. She wrote poems, and contributed two papers to Johnson's *Rambler*, but her reputation and fortune were principally made by her translation of Epictetus, which she published in 1758.

[A. C. C. Gaussen, *A Woman of Wit and Wisdom*.]

CHARLES JOHNSTONE (?1719-?1800) was born in Co. Limerick, and educated at Trinity College, Dublin. He was called to the Bar, but was prevented from practising

by deafness. At the somewhat advanced age of sixty-three he appears to have gone to India to seek his fortune; what is more extraordinary, he found it, becoming a prosperous journalist and proprietor of a journal. He died at Calcutta. Of his five novels, only one is remembered. *Chrysal, or the Adventures of a Guinea* was published in 1760; additional volumes appeared between 1760 and 1765. It is a *roman à clef*; its powerful and caustic pages won for their author the name of "a prose Juvenal"; but the popularity of the book was largely due to the fact that it introduced real persons under a thin disguise.

GEORGE COLMAN the Elder (1732-1794) was born in Florence, where his father was envoy, and was educated at Westminster School and Christ Church, Oxford. He was called to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn, but an intimacy with Garrick led him to write for the stage. His first comedy, *Polly Honeycombe* (1760), was produced anonymously out of respect to his uncle, William Pulteney, Earl of Bath. He was very successful with *The Jealous Wife* (1761), a comedy based on *Tom Jones*. *The Clandestine Marriage*, written in collaboration with Garrick (1766), is his best play. He wrote or adapted many other plays, some thirty in all; managed Covent Garden Theatre from 1767 to 1774, and the Haymarket from 1777 to 1789; translated Terence and Horace's *Ars Poetica*; edited Beaumont and Fletcher; and died insane. He was a notable figure in the literary and dramatic life of his day, and his comedies have something of the brilliance of Sheridan's.

ISAAC BICKERSTAFFE (?d. 1812) was born in Ireland about 1735, and was page to Lord Chesterfield when Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. He wrote some twenty dramatic pieces between 1760 and 1771, and was on familiar terms with Garrick, Johnson, Goldsmith, and others of that coterie. He held a commission in the Marines, but was ignominiously dismissed, and in 1772 exiled himself to France to escape indictment on a capital charge, dying there in the utmost misery forty years later. His pieces, which are mostly comic operas, have some sparkle; the best known of them are (it might be more correct to say "were") *Love in a Village* (1762), *The Maid of the Mill* (1765), and *The Padlock*.

JAMES GRAINGER (?1721-1766), the son of a Jacobite gentleman who had to sell his estate after the 1715 rebellion, was born in Berwickshire, and educated at Edinburgh University, where he eventually graduated M.D. in 1753. He was an army surgeon from 1745 to 1748; he attempted unsuccessfully to set up a practice in London, and was driven to literature for a livelihood. His translation of Tibullus won some fame. He became a friend of Johnson, Shenstone, and Glover, and was encouraged by Thomas Percy (q.v.). In 1759 he went to St. Christopher, in the West Indies, where he married an heiress and settled down, dying there of West Indian fever at the age of forty-five. His semi-didactic poem *The Sugar Cane*, in four books, was published in 1764. It is flat and bathetic; one half-line, "Now, Muse, let's sing of rats", has

acquired a sort of immortality in the pages of Boswell.

WILLIAM FALCONER (1732-1769), the son of a wigmaker, was born in Edinburgh, and went to sea at an early age. He was second mate on a ship which was wrecked off Cape Colonna (better known to classical scholars as Sunium); he was one of the three survivors. He utilized his experiences in his most celebrated poem, *The Shipwreck*, which he published in 1762, complete with a diagram of a full-rigged merchantman for the benefit of land-lubbers. He dedicated his poem to the Duke of York, who got him rated as midshipman and promoted to purser. His *Universal Marine Dictionary* (1769) was a useful compilation. In 1769 he sailed as purser on the *Aurora*, bound for Bengal; she reached the Cape of Good Hope, but was presumably lost with all hands off Mozambique. *The Shipwreck* is a frigid and conventional poem in couplets, but is distinguished from many contemporary didactic poems by the author's intimate knowledge of the technicalities of his subject.

HENRY HOME, LORD KAMES (1696-1782), the son of a country gentleman, was born in Berwickshire and educated at home. He was bound by indenture to a writer to the signet, but decided to become an advocate, and was called to the Scottish Bar in 1724. In 1752 he became a Lord of Session, and assumed the title of Lord Kames; in 1763 he became a Lord of Justiciary. In addition to his legal works, he published *Essays on the*

Principles of Morality and Natural Religion (1751), *Introduction to the Art of Thinking* (1761), and his best-known work, *Elements of Criticism* (1762), in which, discarding all arbitrary rules of literary composition, he endeavoured to establish a new theory on the principles of human nature. He also wrote on agriculture and education. His style is crabbed, and his books are dreary reading.

DAVID DALRYMPLE, LORD HAILES (1726-1792), the eldest son of a Haddingtonshire baronet who was Auditor of the Exchequer of Scotland, was born in Edinburgh and educated at Eton and Utrecht. He was called to the Scottish Bar in 1748, and in 1766 was made a judge of the Court of Session as Lord Hailes, becoming a judge of the Justiciary ten years later. His publications were numerous, but consist principally of new editions and translations. Of his original productions, *The Annals of Scotland from Malcolm Canmore to the Accession of the House of Stewart* (1776 and 1779) is the most important. This history is bare, dry, and matter-of-fact in its tone; but it is accurate, well documented, and studiously impartial. It is the work of a judge rather than of a man-of-letters, and entitles Lord Hailes to rank as the father of Scottish history. Johnson had a high opinion of Hailes, in spite of his nationality, religion, and politics.

THOMAS REID (1710-1796) was born at Strachan, Kincardineshire, where his father was parish minister. He was educated at

Marischal College, Aberdeen, and in 1737 was presented to the living of New Machar, Aberdeenshire. In 1752 he was elected professor of moral philosophy at King's College, Aberdeen; in 1764 he succeeded Adam Smith as professor of moral philosophy in Glasgow University, and published his *Inquiry into the Human Mind on the Principles of Common Sense*. His other writings are *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man* (1785) and *Essays on the Active Powers of Man* (1788). His philosophy was directed against the principles and inferences of Berkeley and Hume, to which he opposed the doctrine of common sense. He was the founder of what is known as the Scottish School of Philosophy, in which he was followed by Dugald Stewart and Sir William Hamilton. His style is plain, with an occasional purple patch.

ELIZABETH MONTAGU (1720-1800), "the Queen of the Blues", was the daughter of a Yorkshire squire named Robinson. In 1742 she married Edward Montagu, a grandson of the first Earl of Sandwich, a wealthy man twenty-nine years her senior, who left her a widow in 1775. She was a leader of literary society rather than a writer; her tongue was sharper than her pen. Her evening assemblies were famous, and gave rise to the term "blue-stocking", though it is uncertain in which of two ways the phrase originated. Mrs. Montagu contributed three dialogues to Lyttelton's *Dialogues of the Dead* (1760), and, nine years later, published an *Essay on the Genius and Writings of Shakespeare*, in which she rather feebly defended

Shakespeare from Voltaire's attacks. [R. Huchon, *Mrs. Montagu, 1720-1800.*]

ALEXANDER CARLYLE (1722-1805), usually known as "Jupiter" Carlyle, owing to his majestic appearance, was born at Cummertrees Manse, near Annan. He was educated at Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Leyden Universities, and was parish minister of Inveresk, Midlothian, from 1748 until his death. He was the leader of the moderate or Broad Church party, and was moderator of the General Assembly in 1770. In 1789 he was appointed Dean of the Chapel Royal. His admirable *Autobiography* was not published until 1860, when it was edited by J. Hill Burton. It gives a vivid picture of Scottish life in the eighteenth century. Carlyle was an eyewitness of the Porteous riots; was present at the battle of Prestonpans; was censured for assisting at the production of Home's *Douglas*; and was intimate with all the most eminent Scots of his day. He was not by any means a kill-joy, and, as his nickname implies, had a liking for the modern equivalents of nectar and ambrosia.

JOHN WILKES (1727-1797), the son of a rich distiller, was born in Clerkenwell and educated at Leyden. Returned to Parliament as member for Aylesbury (1757), he attained considerable notoriety by the publication of a paper entitled *The North Briton*, attacking Bute and, in No. 45, commenting severely on the king's speech to Parliament. *The North Briton* constitutes Wilkes's chief claims to literary consideration. Its literary

merits are not striking. With the rest of his life—his illegal expulsions from Parliament, his exile, and his final triumph—literary history has no concern. His speeches and pamphlets are not as good as his reputation as a demagogue would lead one to expect; he shone most at impromptu witticisms, which were probably strengthened in their appeal by his manner, his gestures, and even by his squint.

[O. A. Sherrard, *A Life of John Wilkes*.]

CHRISTOPHER ANSTEY (1724-1805), the son of the rector of Brinkley, Cambridgeshire, was born there and educated at Eton and King's College, Cambridge. He was a fellow of his college for ten years; he then married and settled down to the life of a country gentleman. He wrote much occasional verse, but only one of his writings is remembered, *The New Bath Guide, or Memoirs of the Blunderhead Family*, which appeared in 1766. It is a series of fifteen poetical epistles descriptive of contemporary life at Bath. Some of Anstey's humour is now somewhat faded, but the book was widely popular when it appeared. His verse is lively, and resembles that of "Thomas Ingoldsby".

JAMES BEATTIE (1735-1803), the son of a shopkeeper and small farmer, was born at Laurencekirk, Kincardineshire, and educated at Marischal College, Aberdeen, where he graduated M.A. in 1753, and where he was appointed professor of moral philosophy and logic in 1760. In 1770 he published his *Essay on the Nature and Immutability of Truth*, in which he

feebly attempted to confute Hume, and which won him the D.C.L. degree from Oxford and a pension of £200 from George III. His principal poem, *The Minstrel*, appeared in two books, published in 1771 and 1774 respectively. He wrote various ethical and æsthetical dissertations of no value. His domestic life was unhappy; his wife became insane and both his sons died young. He was a worthy man, although somewhat intolerant, as worthy men are apt to be; he was a very indifferent poet. He seems in *The Minstrel* to hover uncertainly between jest and earnest. It is a planless and incoherent poem, curiously illogical to be the work of a professor of logic.

[M. Forbes, *Beattie and his Friends*.]

JAMES BURNETT, LORD MONBODDO (1714-1799), was born at Monboddo, Kincardineshire, and educated at the Universities of Aberdeen, Edinburgh, and Gröningen. He was called to the Scottish Bar in 1737, and in 1767 was made one of the Lords of Session, and took the title of Lord Monboddo. He was an able judge, with a reputation for eccentricity. His works consist of *The Origin and Progress of Language* (six vols., 1773-1792) and *Ancient Metaphysics* (six vols., 1779-1799). They contain a strange mixture of paradox and acute observation. He was a pioneer in the study of anthropology, and believed that the orang-outang was a degraded kind of human being.

RICHARD CUMBERLAND (1732-1811), whose father eventually became an Irish bishop, was the son of

"Jug" Bentley and grandson of "the awful Aristarch". He was educated at Westminster and Trinity College, Cambridge, where he was elected to a fellowship. He became private secretary to Lord Halifax, was clerk of reports in the Board of Trade, and was secretary of it from 1776 until its suppression. In a diplomatic mission to Spain in 1780, Cumberland's zeal outran his discretion, and he returned £4500 out of pocket. His literary output thereupon increased. He wrote altogether over fifty plays, two novels, a *Spectator*-like periodical, an epic or two, and *Memoirs*. Only his *Memoirs* (egotistic and innocent of dates, but valuable) and two or three of his plays (*The Brothers*, 1769, *The West Indian*, 1771, *The Fashionable Lover*, 1772) are noteworthy. His comedies are of the sentimental variety; in his *Retaliation*, Goldsmith has said that "comedy wonders at being so fine". Cumberland was caricatured by Sheridan, not unjustly, as Sir Fretful Plagiary in *The Critic* (1779).

WILLIAM JULIUS MICKLE (1735-1788) was born at Langholm, Dumfriesshire, where his father was parish minister. He was educated at Edinburgh High School, and eventually became owner of an Edinburgh brewery, but he had no enthusiasm for this work, failed, and went to London at the age of twenty-eight to seek his fortune with his pen. For six years he was corrector to the Clarendon Press, Oxford; in 1775 he made some money and acquired considerable fame by his translation of Camoens's *Lusiads*, a free but spirited version. Mickle was the author of the ballad

Cumnor Hall, which inspired Scott to write *Kenilworth*, and was probably but not quite certainly the author of the well-known song *There's nae luck about the house*, sometimes rather absurdly entitled *The Mariner's Wife*.

JOSEPH WARTON (1722-1800) was a son of Thomas Warton (?1688-1745), professor of poetry at Oxford and vicar of Basingstoke. He was educated at Winchester and at Oriel College, Oxford, where he graduated B.A. in 1744. He took holy orders, and held many benefices, but not enough to satisfy his ambitions. He became second master of Winchester in 1755, and headmaster eleven years later. He was not a success; after the third insurrection of his pupils (1793) he resigned. He published two volumes of *Odes*, in 1745 and 1746, in which he broke, to the best of his ability, with the Popian tradition. His notable *Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope* appeared in two volumes, separated by a wide gap (1757 and 1782). His edition of Pope (1797) was an admirable piece of work; he severely criticized in it and in his *Essay* the "correct" school of poetry. He shone as a critic more than as a poet, but was an important literary figure of his time.

THOMAS WARTON (1728-1790) was Joseph Warton's younger brother, and was educated at Basingstoke and at Trinity College, Oxford, of which he was a resident fellow for almost forty years. His poems, many of which were connected with Oxford life, won him a reputation as an original writer, and his *Observations on Spenser's*

Faery Queene (1754) proved him to be an acute critic. He was professor of poetry at Oxford from 1757 to 1767, and in 1785 succeeded Whitehead as Poet Laureate. He was a genial and convivial man, with a distinct taste for "cakes and ale", particularly the latter. He was a friend of Johnson, though they fell out occasionally. His great work was his unfinished *History of English Poetry* (three vols., 1774-1781), which did much to restore our earlier poets to favour and to demonstrate that English literature did not begin with Dryden. Warton's book has many blemishes (corrected in no very happy way by W. C. Hazlitt and others in 1874), but it cannot be said even yet to be entirely superseded.

THOMAS TYRWHITT (1730-1786), the son of the rector of St. James's, Westminster, was educated at Eton and Queen's College, Oxford, becoming a fellow of Merton in 1755. He was called to the Bar at the Middle Temple, became Deputy-Secretary at War (1756-1762), and Clerk of the House of Commons (1762-1768). From 1768 onwards he lived a life of learned retirement. He did some valuable work upon some of the Greek classics, but his fame rests mainly upon his edition of Chaucer (five vols., 1775-1778). No single man has done as much for Shakespeare as Tyrwhitt has done for Chaucer. He purged his works of much foreign matter, corrected the text, elucidated many difficulties, and pointed out "the pronunciation of the feminine -e". He thus restored to Chaucer, in part at any rate, his grace of language and metre. His edition did much

to remove the impression that Chaucer was an entertaining but quaint old author whose poems would not scan.

HESTER CHAPONE (1727-1801), whose maiden name was Mulso, was the daughter of a Northamptonshire country gentleman, and displayed precocious literary abilities. She was a friend of Dr. Johnson, for whom she wrote No. 10 of *The Rambler*, and was an admirer and correspondent of Richardson. In 1760 she married an attorney named Chapone, who died nine months later. Her best-known work was her *Letters on the Improvement of the Mind* (1773), once considered of high educational value, but now only of interest for the sidelight which it throws on the social history of the eighteenth century.

HESTER LYNCH PIOZZI (1741-1821), who is better known in literary history as Mrs. Thrale, was the daughter of John Salusbury of Bodvel, Carnarvonshire. In 1763 she was married to Henry Thrale, a wealthy brewer and member of Parliament. Soon after her marriage she became acquainted with Dr. Johnson, who lived with the Thrales several days in each week for sixteen years. Mr. Thrale died in 1781; his widow, who had borne him twelve children, married in 1784 an Italian music-master named Piozzi. This marriage caused a break in her friendship with Johnson, who died a few months later. Mrs. Piozzi's writings include *Anecdotes of the late Samuel Johnson, during the last Twenty Years of his Life* (1786) and *Letters to and from the late Samuel Johnson*,

LL.D. (1788). Her books are a useful supplement to Boswell, who is, however, her superior in every respect.

JOSEPH PRIESTLEY (1733-1804), who is chiefly noted as the discoverer of oxygen, was the son of a Yorkshire cloth-dresser, and was educated at Batley Grammar School and at Heckmondwike. He became a dissenting minister, but for some time was a schoolmaster, and, at a later date, librarian and companion to a nobleman. In theology he was a Unitarian, and in politics an advanced Radical. His sympathy with the French Revolutionists led to his house being wrecked (1791); three years later he emigrated to America. His collected works, theological and religious, philosophical and educational, historical, political and social, psychological and metaphysical, fill twenty-six octavo volumes, but are now all forgotten. His *History of the Corruptions of Christianity* (1782) was his best-known work.

JOHN WOLCOT (1738-1819), the son of a country surgeon, was born in Devonshire, and was educated at Liskeard and Bodmin and in France. He studied medicine in London, graduated M.D. at Aberdeen in 1767, and became physician to the Governor of Jamaica. He took holy orders in 1769, and for a time held a living in Jamaica, but returned to England in 1773 and practised medicine in the West Country. In 1778 he removed to London and began his literary career, publishing innumerable lampoons of low literary value under the pseudonym of "Peter Pindar". The most important of them are

Lyric Odes to the Royal Academicians (1782), *The Lousiad* (1785), *Bozzy and Piozzi* (1786), and *Ode upon Ode* (1787). George III, who, like King Paramount I of *Utopia, Limited*, was "a bad king but a good subject", was his favourite butt. He met his match in Gifford, with whom he exchanged *non verba solum sed verbera*. His lampoons were of ephemeral interest; impudence was his chief literary asset; unlike Irving in his impersonation of Hamlet, he was extremely vulgar without being at all funny.

JOHN HORNE TOOKE (1736-1812), the son of a rich poulterer named Horne, was educated at Westminster and Eton and at St. John's College, Cambridge, where he graduated B.A. in 1758. He wished to go to the Bar, but to please his father went into the Church. Most of his difficulties in later life were due to his entering a profession to which he was unsuited. He was for a time incumbent of the Chapel of Ease at Brentford, but became a tutor, and eventually ceased to dress as a parson. He was a violent politician and a friend of Wilkes. In 1778 he was fined and imprisoned for a seditious libel condemning the American War. In 1782 he added the surname of his friend William Tooke of Purley to his own, but was not his heir, as he hoped to be. He was tried for high treason in 1794, but was triumphantly acquitted. He was a noted literary host in his day, and his conversation was almost equal to Johnson's; but he lacked a sacred Boswell. His principal book was his ingenious linguistic work "ΕΙΙΕΑ ΠΙΤΕΡΟΕΝΤΑ, or the Diver-

sions of Purley (1786 and 1805), a curious medley of etymology, grammar, metaphysics, and politics. He was a pioneer in the study of Anglo-Saxon and Gothic.

[M. C. Yarborough, *John Horne Tooke*.]

RUDOLF ERICH RASPE (1737-1794) was born in Hanover, studied at Göttingen and Leipzig, and became professor at Cassel and keeper of the Landgrave of Hesse's gems and medals, many of which he stole. He was arrested, but managed to escape to England, and spent the remaining nineteen years of his life in the British Isles. He superintended mining operations in Cornwall, Caithness, and Donegal, dying of scarlet fever at Muckross at the age of fifty-seven. His mining activities in Scotland gave Scott a hint for an incident in *The Antiquary*. He was the author of the nucleus of *Baron Münchhausen's Narrative of his Marvellous Travels and Campaigns in Russia* (1785). This edition contained only Chapters II to VI of the current version, the other fifteen chapters being added by booksellers' hacks, and a sequel being added in 1793 as a parody of James Bruce's *Travels to discover the Source of the Nile*. Raspe's clever chapters are pure extravaganzas; those of his unknown collaborators have a satirical flavour. The book is a classic in its way, and has been translated into more languages than any English book, except *The Pilgrim's Progress*, *Robinson Crusoe*, and *Gulliver's Travels*.

ERASMUS DARWIN (1731-1802), the son of a country gentleman, was educated at Chesterfield School

and St. John's College, Cambridge. He studied medicine at Edinburgh, and practised as a physician at Lichfield until 1781, when he removed to Derby. He was well known as a free-thinker and Radical, and as a man of considerable scientific attainments. He acquired posthumous fame as the grandfather of Charles Darwin and of Francis Galton. His literary reputation, such as it is, rests upon his poem *The Botanic Garden* (Part II, *The Loves of the Plants*, 1789; Part I, *The Economy of Vegetation*, 1791). This poem contains almost all the worst faults of the artificial school of poetry. It is not true to say that it was killed by Canning's brilliant parody, *The Loves of the Triangles*, in the *Anti-Jacobin*. On the contrary, it owes its immortality less to its own merits than to those of its parody.

JOHN LOGAN (1748-1788), the son of a farmer, was born in Midlothian and educated at the Musselburgh Grammar School and at Edinburgh University. He was licensed to preach in 1770, and ordained and admitted to the parish of South Leith in 1773. He contributed largely to the revision of the paraphrases and hymns for use in public worship, but his tragedy of *Runnemed* (1783) scandalized many churchmen, and he began to drink more than becomed a minister. He resigned his charge in 1786, adopted a literary career in London, and died two years later. In 1770 he published the poems of his friend Michael Bruce, who had died three years previously at the age of twenty-one. Some poems in the volume were by other authors, some by Logan himself.

One poem, the *Ode to the Cuckoo*, he afterwards included, with improvements, in a volume of his own poems, and a somewhat rabid controversy, exacerbated by local patriotism and perhaps also by ecclesiastical prejudice, arose as to whether Logan or Bruce wrote this poem. Burke called it "the most beautiful lyric in our language"; actually it is a poor enough production, which almost any competent verse-writer might have turned out in an inspired half-hour. The authorship has not been and probably cannot be determined; the probability is slightly in favour of Logan's authorship.

HANNAH MORE (1745-1833), the daughter of a schoolmaster, was born at Stapleton, near Bristol, and educated at her sister's boarding-school. Her talents early made her acquainted with Johnson, Burke, Garrick, and other literary men, and her plays, *The Inflexible Captive* (1774), *Percy* (1777), and *The Fatal Falsehood* (1779), were fairly successful. After Garrick's death in 1779 she devoted herself to the composition of works having a moral and religious tendency, the diffusion of tracts, and philanthropic labours. Her series of *Cheap Repository Tracts*, intended to counteract the influence of the French Revolution, was widely popular. Among her best-known books are her *Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education* (1799); *Cælebs in search of a Wife*, a moral novel with a satiric undercurrent (1809); and *Moral Sketches* (1819).

THOMAS DAY (1748-1789) was born in London and educated at

Charterhouse and Corpus Christi College, Oxford. His father, who was a collector of customs, died when Day was a year old, leaving him an estate of £900 a year. He was amiably eccentric, and educated two orphans, a blonde and a brunette, with a view to marrying one of them, but married an heiress instead. He renounced most of the indulgences of a man of fortune, that he might bestow his superfluities upon those who wanted necessities. He attempted to carry out social reform among the poor, and ran a farm for some years on philanthropic, not commercial, lines. When endeavouring to ride an unbroken colt, he was thrown off and killed, at the age of forty-one. His celebrated *History of Sandford and Merton* appeared in three volumes (1783, 1786, and 1789). It embodied some of Rousseau's views upon education, and was for long the chief English example of the pedagogic novel. Like its author, it is a mixture of absurdity and sound sense. It had a long life, but the generations to whom Mr. Barlow was a household word have passed away.

ROBERT BAGE (1728-1801) was born near Derby, where he was educated, and on leaving school entered his father's business of paper-making. He afterwards established a paper manufactory near Tamworth, which he carried on until his death. He was bred a Quaker, but became something of a free-thinker. His first novel, *Mount Henneth*, was written at the age of fifty-three. The others are *Barham Downs* (1784), *The Fair Syrian* (1787), *James Wallace* (1788), *Man as he is* (1792), and *Hernsprong, or*

Man as he is not (1796). The last of these is the best. Bage's novels, though some were included by Scott in his Novelists' Library, are not very accessible now. He was not unlike Richardson, but had a sense of humour. His powers of character-drawing were much greater than his powers of devising a plot.

THOMAS HOLCROFT (1745-1809) was born in London and was self-educated. His father was a cobbler; he himself was in turn stable-boy, teacher, shoemaker, tutor, prompter, and actor before he more or less settled down to a literary career. He was a prolific writer, producing six novels and over thirty plays, besides many translations from French and German. He was a friend of William Godwin (q.v.) and an extreme Radical, and was indicted for high treason in 1794, but discharged. The best of his novels, which are spoilt by their propagandist tendencies, are the semi-autobiographical *Alwyn, or the Gentleman Comedian* (1780) and *Anna St. Ives* (1792). His best play is *The Road to Ruin* (1792), though *The Deserted Daughter* (1795) runs it close. He was one of the earliest writers of melodrama, in the original sense of that word. His interesting *Autobiography* (1816) was completed and perhaps editorially manipulated by Hazlitt.

HENRY JAMES PYE (1745-1813), the son of a Berkshire country gentleman, was educated at Magdalen College, Oxford. He inherited his father's estates, which were encumbered with heavy debts, in 1766, and sat as M.P. for Berkshire from 1784 to 1790. In 1792 he was appointed police magistrate

for Westminster. He cherished literary ambitions from an early age, and wrote many poems (*Beauty, The Triumph of Fashion, Shooting, &c.*) without anything to commend them. In 1790 he was made Poet Laureate, to the delight of many mockers and scorners; his official poems were, if possible, worse than his unofficial, and his principal action as Laureate was to commute the ancient annual dole of a tierce of canary for £27 per annum. His longest poem, *Alfred*, appeared in 1801. Apart from his poetical pretensions, Pye was no fool; his *Summary of the Duties of a Justice of the Peace out of Sessions* (1808) was a capital book of its kind, though scarcely what is expected from a Poet Laureate.

GEORGE COLMAN the Younger (1762-1836), the son of George Colman the Elder (q.v.), was born in London and educated at Westminster School, Christ Church, Oxford, and King's College, Aberdeen. He was intended for the Bar, but soon turned to literature and the theatre. He succeeded his father as manager of Haymarket Theatre in 1789, and on his death became its patentee. Of his many dramas the most successful were *Inkle and Yarico* (1787), *The Heir-at-Law* (1797), *The Poor Gentleman* (1802), and *John Bull, or an Englishman's Fireside* (1803). His principal non-dramatic work is a miscellany named *Broad Grins* in its second and later impressions. Colman was in 1824 appointed Examiner of Plays, in which capacity he showed an exaggerated sense of delicacy—a sense of delicacy which he had completely suppressed as a playwright. His plays are more

or less forgotten; one character, Dr. Pangloss in *The Heir-at-Law*, a celebrated stage pedant, still lives in an insubstantial way, like the shades in Homer.

HARRIET (1757-1851) and SOPHIA LEE (1750-1824) were daughters of the actor John Lee (d. 1781). Sophia's comedy, *The Chapter of Accidents* (1781), was sufficiently profitable to allow the sisters to set up a Ladies' Seminary at Bath. Sophia also wrote an historical romance entitled *The Recess* (1784), and a feeble tragedy. Harriet wrote a comedy, *The New Peerage* (1787), and a novel, *Clara Lennox* (1797), but the sisters' chief work, *The Canterbury Tales* (1797-1805), was written in collaboration, Sophia writing the introduction, the *Young Lady's Tale*, and the *Clergyman's Tale*, and Harriet supplying the ten other tales. The *Tales* have now lost something of their savour, but when they first appeared they had the merits of novelty and brevity, in the latter virtue contrasting favourably with the three-volume novel.

RICHARD PORSON (1759-1808), the son of the parish clerk of East Ruston, Norfolk, was educated at various local schools, Eton, and Trinity College, Cambridge, where he won the Craven scholarship, the first chancellor's medal, and a fellowship. His reputation as a scholar became European after his publication of *Short Notes upon Toup's Emendations of Suidas* (1790). In 1787 he wrote a series of three sarcastic letters to *The Gentleman's Magazine*, ironically eulogizing and at the same time parodying Hawkins's pompous *Life*

of Dr. Johnson; and in the next year he contributed to the same periodical his *Letters to Archdeacon Travis*, in which he finally disposed of all claims of 1st John, v, 7 (the three heavenly witnesses) to be authentic. In this, his chief contribution to English literature, his sarcasm is only slightly inferior to Swift's, and quite as keen as that of Junius. He was elected regius professor of Greek at Cambridge in 1792, and librarian to the London Institution in 1806. He died of apoplexy in his forty-ninth year. He was the most brilliant of textual critics, his services to Æschylus, Aristophanes, Euripides, and Athenæus being especially conspicuous. He also inaugurated the methodical study of Greek metres. Some of his facetiæ, like those of Swift, are a trifle puerile.

WILLIAM PALEY (1743-1805) was born at Peterborough and educated at Giggleswick School, where his father was headmaster, and at Christ's College, Cambridge. He was senior wrangler in 1763, and subsequently became fellow and tutor of his college. He enjoyed many ecclesiastical dignities, being Archdeacon of Carlisle, Prebendary of St. Paul's, and Subdean of Lincoln. His chief works are *The Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy* (1785), *Horæ Paulinæ* (1790), *A View of the Evidences of Christianity* (1794), and *Natural Theology* (1802). Paley was not and did not claim to be an original thinker, but he had a great gift of expounding clearly the views of others, and could marshal his arguments with great skill. His *Evidences of Christianity* was for many years a textbook at Cam-

bridge, though it is to be feared that many students preferred an epitomized or metrical version to the original text.

JOHN HOOKHAM FRERE (1769-1846), the son of an eminent antiquary, was educated at Eton, where he formed a friendship with Canning, and at Caius College, Cambridge. He entered the Foreign Office, succeeded Canning as Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs in 1799, and was Ambassador at Lisbon (1800-1802) and at Madrid (1802-1804 and 1808-1809). He succeeded to the family estates in 1807, but made Malta his home for the last twenty-five years of his life. Frere was an important contributor to the *Anti-Jacobin*, and probably wrote the greater part of *The Loves of the Triangles*. In 1817 he published *The Monks and the Giants* under the pseudonym of "Whistlecraft"; this satirical poem in *ottava rima* directly inspired Byron to write *Beppo* and *Don Juan*. Frere also translated four comedies of Aristophanes (*Acharnians*, *Knights*, *Birds*, *Frogs*) into English verse; this once-famous rendering has been superseded by the more scholarly and livelier version of B. B. Rogers (q.v.).

[Gabrielle Festing, *J. H. Frere and his Friends*.]

WILLIAM GIFFORD (1756-1826), the son of a ne'er-do-well glazier, was born at Ashburton, Devonshire. He was sent to sea for a year, and afterwards apprenticed to a shoemaker, but was enabled by the kindness of some friends to go to Exeter College, Oxford, where he graduated B.A. in 1782. After

being tutor for some time in Lord Grosvenor's family, he published in 1794 and 1795 his satires *The Baviad* and *The Maeviad*, which attacked the poetasters of the Della Cruscan School. He edited the *Anti-Jacobin* during its short but brilliant career, and published a translation of Juvenal in 1802. He also edited the *Quarterly Review* with much ability from its foundation in 1809 until 1824. His most important work, however, was, perhaps, his editing of the works of Jonson, Ford, and Massinger. He was a careful and painstaking editor, but in his notes handled his predecessors with unnecessary malignity. His deformed body and his early struggles would appear to have spoilt his temper. He was a Tory of the most determined description.

CHARLES BROCKDEN BROWN (1771-1810) was born in Philadelphia. He was destined for the law, but abandoned it in favour of literature, being the first American to adopt literature as a profession. His novel *Wieland, or the Transformation* was published in 1798; *Ormond, or the Secret Witness* in 1799; and *Arthur Mervyn* in 1800. In the last-named work the ravages of the yellow fever, which the author had witnessed in New York and Philadelphia, are painted with great realism. Among his other works are *Clara Howard* (1801) and *Jane Talbot* (1804). He was an imitator of Godwin, and much of his work is of a wild, preternatural kind.

THOMAS PAINE (1737-1809), the son of a Quaker staymaker, was born at Thetford, and was in turn

a staymaker, a sailor, a school-master, an exciseman, and a tobacco-conist. In 1774 he emigrated to America with a letter of introduction from Benjamin Franklin. His pamphlet *Common Sense* (1776), written to recommend the separation of the colonies from Great Britain, and his periodical *The Crisis* gave him a title to be considered one of the founders of American independence. In 1787 he returned to England, and in answer to Burke's *Reflections on the French Revolution* wrote his *Rights of Man* (1791-1792). He fled to France to escape prosecution, was chosen a member of the National Convention, voted for the banishment of the king, and was arrested and imprisoned for ten months, escaping the guillotine by an accident. His deistical work *The Age of Reason* (1794) was partly written in prison. He returned to America in 1802, and died in New York seven years later. His extreme Radical views made him cordially disliked by many; his religious opinions widened the circle of his enemies; he was for long regarded by Radicals as their chief prophet. His style is vigorous, he was an accomplished pamphleteer, and was not so violent in his views or his language as his enemies made him out to be.

[F. J. Gould, *Thomas Paine*.]

ARTHUR YOUNG (1741-1820), the son of the rector of Bradfield, Suffolk, was apprenticed to a merchant in Lynn, but became an experimenter in and writer on agriculture, being much more successful in the latter than in the former capacity. His agricultural knowledge won him the esteem of

"Farmer George"; in 1793 he was appointed secretary to the newly-constituted Board of Agriculture. His old age was rendered unhappy by the death of his favourite daughter, by blindness, and by morbid religious beliefs. Of his many writings his *Travels in France* (1792) is the most interesting, from its sketches of the social condition of France just before and just after the Revolution of 1789. Young ranks as the foremost of our agricultural writers, and he had a gift for coining epigrammatic phrases.

THOMAS ROBERT MALTHUS (1766-1834) was born near Guildford, where his father had a small estate, and was educated privately, at Warrington Dissenting Academy, and at Jesus College, Cambridge, where he graduated as ninth wrangler and was elected to a fellowship. He took holy orders, and held a curacy at Albury, Surrey. In 1805 he was appointed professor of history and political economy in the East India Company's college at Haileybury, an office which he held till his death. In 1798 he published his *Essay on the Principle of Population*, which was almost rewritten in the edition of 1803, which in its turn was improved in later editions. His main principle was that population, when unchecked, increases in a higher ratio than the means of subsistence; that the natural checks upon excessive increase are vice, misery, and moral restraint; and that the enlightened legislator should aim at diminishing the first two checks and at encouraging the last.

WILLIAM MITFORD (1744-1827),

the son of a country gentleman, was born in London and educated at Cheam School and Queen's College, Oxford. At the age of seventeen he succeeded to his father's property at Exbury. He sat in the House of Commons for many years, was verderer of the New Forest, and held a commission in the South Hampshire Militia. His brother-officer Gibbon persuaded him to undertake his principal work, a *History of Greece*, which took more than a quarter of a century to appear (1784-1810). Mitford's history is well written, but is marred by strong anti-democratic prejudices. It was, however, a pioneer work, and held a commanding position until displaced by Thirlwall and Grote, the latter of whom was no less biased in the opposite direction.

DUGALD STEWART (1753-1828), the son of the professor of mathematics at Edinburgh, was born in Edinburgh and educated at the High School and University there. He was a man of all-round intellectual accomplishments, and was associated with his father in the mathematical professorship from 1775 until 1785, when he was appointed to the chair of moral philosophy. His lectures were extremely popular, and his influence upon younger men, especially young Whigs who were unable to go for the Grand Tour on account of the situation in Europe, was profound. His fame was largely due to his eloquence and personality; it is hardly sustained by his writings. They include *The Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind* (1792), *The Outlines of Moral Philosophy* (1794), and *Philosophi-*

cal Essays (1810). Stewart was a follower of Thomas Reid (q.v.), but ranks as a brilliant expositor rather than as an original thinker.

ANNA SEWARD (1747-1809), the daughter of a canon of Lichfield, was a literary celebrity in her day, and was on friendly terms with Erasmus Darwin, Thomas Day, Richard Edgeworth, and others. Her poetical novel *Louisa* (1782) is not a success either as a novel or a poem, nor have her *Sonnets* (1799) much more value. Her numerous letters are entertaining, especially when they were not intended to be by their author. She was known as "the swan of Lichfield", and seems to have deserved a foolish sobriquet of that kind.

[E. V. Lucas, *A Swan and her Friends*.]

ANNA LETITIA BARBAULD (1743-1825), the daughter of a Presbyterian minister and schoolmaster named Aikin, was born at Kibworth, Leicestershire, and given an almost masculine education by her father. She published a small volume of miscellaneous poems in 1772, and in 1773, in conjunction with her brother, Dr. John Aikin, a collection of pieces in prose. Twenty years later she joined her brother again in writing the popular *Evenings at Home*. In 1774 she married the Rev. Rochemont Barbauld, and in 1775 published her *Hymns in Prose for Children*, her best work. After the suicide of her husband in 1808, she did much editorial work. Her last long poem, *Eighteen Hundred and Eleven*, appeared in 1812. Her poems are pleasing and now and again striking,

but she is chiefly remembered as a writer for children.

ELIZABETH INCHBALD (1753-1821), the daughter of a Roman Catholic farmer, was born near Bury St. Edmunds and was self-educated. At the age of nineteen she married Joseph Inchbald, an actor, who died seven years later. She acted in conjunction with her husband, and continued to appear on the stage until 1789, when she retired and devoted herself to writing. She wrote some nineteen plays in all, but many of them are mere adaptations, though most

were successful on the stage. The best are *I'll Tell you What* (1785), *Everyone has his fault* (1793), and *Wives as they were* (1797). Her two novels, *A Simple Story* (1791) and *Nature and Art* (1796), are of much greater merit, though they are slightly marred by their doctrinaire tendencies. Mrs. Inchbald also edited *The British Theatre* and *The Modern Theatre*, and was well remunerated for all her work. Her character appears to have been an attractive mixture of courage and caution.

[S. R. Littlewood, *Elizabeth Inchbald and her Circle*.]

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